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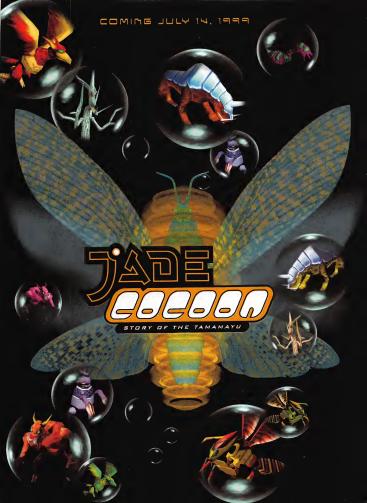
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ALL SAME, SAME TITLE, COMMUNICATION AND FIGURE SERVICE CONTROL OF THE SAME SERVICE CON

Let's cut to the chase. If you haven't pre-purchased, prebooked, or already made up your mind that you're going to plunk down the cash for a Dreamcast come September 9th, you're missing the boat. Those of you that are you using the 1'm gonna wait for PSY' or "Sega burned me with the 32X and/or Sega-CD" argument as the basis for not getting a DC... well, your loss. Come September 9th, the rest of us will be reveiling in the first basth of phenomenal Dreamcast software, while the aforementioned wait and see guys widels their burnts. Anybow that sall 1'm goomes say about Dreamcast thumbs. Anybow that sall 1'm goomes say about Dreamcast while the present some say about Dreamcast Dreamcast Dreamcast and the some people are never gones est flook, but dulily. Now, no to other matters.

For starters, fd like to petition you, the reader (as mag editors tend to do from time to lime) for your input on what would make GameFan a better magazine. While we gotten pleify of positive feetback on our inclusion of the petition of t

Next on the agenda; getting a job at GF. I want to take a sea and address this byzantine process by de-mystifying it and letting folks know exacetly what it is we look for when bringing on new editors. Here's the three factors that I consider most important in determining whether most might be a well on the process of the process of the consider most might be a well on the hinging from the make this clear — we're not hinging from the companies of the control of the process of the control of the process of the control of the c

As far as a sense of history goes, that stimply refers to the fact that you didn't just start playing games with PlayStation. Now I know most of you are thinking. 'Of in the play the play the play the play the play the play the line of the play the play the play the play the mitters in this bit that didn't pick up a control pad till the PS showed up. I know, I'm as increduolous as you are, but it's true. And for those that need to ask why a sense of history in the play the p Passion. If there's a single most important factor when determining if a person will get a job a GamePan, it boils down to passion. For instance, if you sit down at that interview (and this goes for any job, STW) and kinds just lay there and let the tide take you where it warts, then all, you'd be correct in assuming that there are about a silion people out there who would kill to be in that position. —MAKE THE MOST OF IT flagain, same goes for any objective of the position of the properties o

A positive outlook on the industry. It's simple really, and something that plays into being able to see the glass as half full, instead of half-mpty. Instead of directing all of your considerable energies in typical GenX-fashion of your considerable energies in typical GenX-fashion perhaps some time could be better spent looking for the redeeming qualities. Sure, there's gings to be times when there isn't anything positive to be said (check this month's Wewpoints), but on the wholler fit be nice if wevyone in gamedand didn't have such a synical outlook on games—you that hated Phantom Mennes. SNAP OUT OF ITII).

you that nation Phalitom wearaes, SNAP UT OF IT ITIN.

You have been a support of the phalitom wearaes, so we are not actively finitely in the phalitom with the phalitom was a support of the phalitom was the phali

gamer in the purest sense of the word. Now that I've got that off my chest, enjoy the issue and I'll see you next month after I dig myself out of the flood of apps I'm going to get in response to this Ed Zone... «Sigh>.

Later!

Editorial Director Eric Mylonas Camerian (ISSM: 1607-7121) butume.

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lream Gamefan

EVEN IF YOUR MEMORY DOESN'T FAIL YOU.

it's thinking 🌀

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# So many rats. So many ways to exterminate them. So what are you waiting for?



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# TOP TEN MOST WANTED

#### September 1999

#### STAR WARS EPISODE 1: RACER

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO 3/12 Pos

- 1) SW EPISODE 1: RACER N64
- 3) LUNAR: SILVER STAR STORY PS
- 4) ZELDA: OOT N64
- 5) South Park N64

#### READER'S TOP TEN

- 6) SYPHON FILTER PS 2) SUPER SMASH BROS. - N64
  - 7) MARIO PARTY N64 8) BLOODY ROAR 2 - PS
    - 9) METAL GEAR SOLID PS 10) GOLDENEYE - N64

#### READER'S MOST WANTED

#### 1) SOUL CALIBUR - DC 6) FINAL FANTASY VIII - PS

- 2) SONIC ADVENTURE DC
- 3) RESIDENT EVIL 2 N64
- 4) SHEN MUE DC
- 5) PERFECT DARK N64
- 7) READY 2 RUMBLE DC
- 8) DONKEY KONG 64 N64
- 9) House of the Dead 2 DC 10) THOUSAND ARMS - PS

1) VIRTUAL ON 2 - ARCADE

2) BUST-A-MOVE POCKET - NGP



#### **GAMEFAN EDITORS' TOP TEN**

4) APE ESCAPE - PS

5) SOUL CALIBUR - DC

1) CRAZY TAXI - ARCADE

3) DEATHTANK - SS 4) LAST BLADE 2 - NG

2) KoF '99 DREAM MATCH\* - DC

#### \*IMPORTTITLE 6) STAR OCEAN 2ND STORY - PS



1) TEKKEN TAG TOURN. - ARCADE 6) SUPERMAN - N64 2) FINAL FANTASY VIII - PS 3) TONIC TROUBLE - N64

7) MGS: VR MISSIONS - PS BLASTO - PS BLAST CORPS - N64 10) R-TYPE DELTA - PS

as of "normal" ECM. 6) APE ESCAPE - PS 7) PARASITE EVE - PS

8) Puyo Puyon - DC 9) SE3: THIRD STRIKE - ARCADE 10) PROP CYCLE - ARCADE

5) MGS INTEGRAL\* - PS 1) SUIKODEN - PS

7) SONIC ADVENTURE\* - DC 3) SF3: 3rd STRIKE - ARCADE
4) FRAME GRIDE\* - DC 8) POWERSTONE - ARCADE 9) KOF '99 DREAM MATCH\* - DC 10) SAMSHO II - NGP 6) MGS INTEGRAL\* - PS



2) FINAL FANTASY COLL.\* - PS 3) PHANTASY STAR 2 - GENESIS 4) OUAKE II - PC 5) NBA SHOWTIME - ARCADE

7) SF3: 3RD STRIKE - ARCADE 8) STAR OCEAN 2ND STORY - PS 9) LUNAR: SSS COMPLETE - PS 10) DEFENDER OF THE CROWN - C64



5) RUSH 2049 - ARCADE

5) SOUL CALIBUR - DC 1) SILENT SCOPE - ARCADE 2) SF EX2 PLUS - ARCADE WIPEOUT 3 - PS TEKKEN TAG TOURN. - ARCADE

6) DANCE DANCE REV. - ARCADE 7) GUITAR FREAKS - ARCADE SF3: THIRD STRIKE - ARCADE 9) BEATMANIA II DX - ARCADE 10) OMEGA BOOST - PS



1) EVERQUEST - PC 2) CIV: TEST OF TIME - PC NCAA FOOTBALL 2000 - PS 4) QUAKE II - PC 5) NBA SHOWTIME - ARCADE

6) MIGHT & MAGIC VII - PC 7) FOX CHAMP. HOCKEY - PS 8) SLED STORM - PS 9) MARIO GOLF 64 - N64 10) MARVEL VS. CAPCOM - ARCADE

#### THE GAME SYSTEM OF YOUR **CHOICE! ENTER TODAY!**

ALL YOU HAVE TO BO TO EXTER THE DRAWING IS WRITE DOWN A LEST OF YOUR TOP 10 PRIVORTE GAMES AND THE 10 GAMES YOU WANT THE MOST THAT AREN'T OUT YET, OR A PIECE OF PAPER OR A POSTCARD THER SI THEM TO: GAMEFAN TOP TEN, 6301 DESOTO AVE., SUITE E

GAMEBOY

YOUR CHOICE OF ONE OF THE PICKS OF THE MORTH IN VIEWPOINT.

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KARL SCHAPE RENO, NV DRAWING IS LIMITED TO ONE (1) ENTRY PER PERSON PER MONTH, DRAWINGS WILL BE HELD ON THE 22ST OF BACH MONTH. THE THREE (3) WHINERS WILL BE ROTIFIED BY MALL AND LISTED ON THIS PAGE. FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF RULES AND REGULATIONS WRITE: GAMLEAN TOP TEN WITH SELF ADDRESSED & STAMPED ENVELOPE.

### DEVELOPER'S TOP TEN

- 1. Team Fortress Classic PC 2. NHL 95/NHL 2000 - Gen/PS
- 3. Diablo PC
- 4. Half-Life PC
- 5. Bomberman SNES
- 6. MicroMachines PS
- 7. Mario Kart N64
- 8. Doom PC
- 9. Age of Empires PC
- 10. Command & Conquer PC

THIS MONTH'S GUEST: TRISTAN BRETT
LEAD DESIGNER (SLED STORM), ELECTRONIC ARTS

### TEAM FORTRESS CLASSIC



PUBLISHER: SIERRA

For me games have got to be visceral and action oriented. Hike games with a bit more depth and thinking. Also, as I seem to have more friends than Jules, multiplayer games play a bigger part of my list — these games are great for having friends over/night!). Still, although I listed Age of Empires there still hasn't been a 'real' Star Wars game that has satisfied me.



Nearly every day, GameFan's Editorial Director hears the question, "What exactly does ECM stand for?" Many guesses and theories have been put forth, but only he knows what it really stands for. The world may never know, but if you think about it, EEM could mean enything. In this month's roundup, we show how easy it is to describe people with the letters ECM.

### <u>ecm@gamefan.com</u>



## ECM

Extremely Cranky Midget—ECM's ill-tempered nature isn't helped any by the constant ribbing about his height, the death of all things he cherishs (2D games, shooters, and 2D shooters), and the mysterious disappearance of his prized action figures.

## cerherus@gamefan.com

#### Under Construction

## CERBERUS

Eluding CHP Megahom—The life of a gaming editor fant a fast paced one. Cerberus has made it his mission to change this. He's already been pulled over four times yet he's managed to avoid any moving violations. Even when he was clocked at 50 in a 5 zone.

## elnino@gamefan.com



#### EL NINO

Erichilada Chewin' Meathead—El Niño has evolved the ability to scart down food as fast as humanly possible, allowing him to spand the remainder of his funch hour with his "other" fovorie pastime. EverQuest. Dark Elf needs food badly.

## eggo@gamefan.com



### EGGO T

Engagement-Crushing Miscreant—Known for chasing married women, Eggo receives much flak for his "acquired taste" in lady friends, as well as his love for all things Square (Soukaigi or Racing Lagoon, anyone?) and his distaste for Asian food.

## dangohead@gamefan.com



## DANGOHEAD

Enormous Ctarial Mass—Look at the size of that noggin! It's HUUUGE!!! Considering paper clips, CDs, and small kittens regularly get sucked into the gravital orbit of his immense crainum, the Bont jokes are well-deserved, don't you think?

## THE 6th MAN



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## Trije artr Departmentr

# reubus@gamefan.com



## REUBUS

Eerie, Carcinogen Man—Nobody can understand it, but Reubus is able to survive on a diet of Pepsi and cigarettes alone. Of course, he wasn't always that pale... and he didn't used to shake like that...

### waka@gamefan.com



#### WAKA

EverQuest Crashes Marriage— Our Senior Art Director has forsaken his wife for the chance to be a half-elf druid in the world of EverQuest. He's currently lost in the "Ocean of Tears"... indeed.

#### tao@gamefan.com

### TAO

Under Construction Extraordinarily Creative Mind— This is how Tao likes to envision nimself, but the truth of the mat ter is he's the creative force behind all those layouts which you can't read such as MvC.

# PRODUCTIVITY

# **GF KONEKO™**

Height: 3.25 in Weight: 8.3 oz Blood Type: AB+ Special Abilities: Caterwayl and Smoke Bomb Escape.

As the entire GameFan crew pulled a grueling all-nighter at the close of this issue, all work came to a screeching halt when someone said, "Waka, sounds like your car alarm is dying." Turns out, it wasn't a car alarm that was making that annoying sound. Rather, it was a nameless stray kitten who'd decided to shack up in the warm and cozy confines of Waka's car engine at 2AM, caterwayling like it just don't care. With flashlight in hand, Reubus, Dangohead, Eggo, and Waka proceeded to chase this unwanted feline guest from car to car. Fearing for its safety and not wanting anyone to start their engine with a messy surprise, we tried to catch it,

but the kitten continually eluded our grasp, moving at the speed of light, and fleeing from car engine to car engine, coming out only to eat some tuna we left it. Imagine his surprise when we woke Cerberus saying, "Hey, we need your car keys ... Why? Cuz there's a cat in

your engine... No ... a C-A-T ... IN your car ... I-N! Despite having a cave-full of ninja gamers armed with miniature Ape Escape nets, it appeared our combined powers were not enough to handle this mighty feline assassing In the end, though, GameFan prevailed and 'saved' the cat. but it took 12 hours to apprehend

# This month in Gamefan's F WORLD

This month, we caught up with Big Bubba, Super Teeter, and the Video Cowboy sending their regards from the "City by the Bay" — San Francisco, CA. The city's famous for hauling in an amazing two tons of seafood per day due to its many fishermen. They wish all their fans the best and wanted to let us know they're happily seeing the sights of the town; the Golden Gate Bridge, Fisherman's Wharf, Alcatraz and the B.O.B.171 This, on the heels of Teeter racking up a \$650 phone bill to a strange 900 number. Hmmm...



Sausage OF Trite MONTrit

We couldn't resist sharing this little insight

with our readers. Video game editor Blake Fischer, now working for a competitor who

will Gen-erally remain nameless, is getting

married in the near future. What's scary is

Blake and his fiancée are also planning a virtual wedding in Norrath, the world of

EverQuest. Not only that, there's talk of the programmers designing him a tuxedo 'skin'

for his character. If that doesn't earn "Sausage of the Month" honors, I don't know

# CHICKEN OF THE MONTH

Super Chicken (a free goody, care of a game company) is the electronic Naboo Fighter toy from Star Wars: Episode I. Sent with love from our friends at Nintendo, this little gem was discovered on our doorstep the same day in which the Naboo Fighter code for Episode I: Racer was released to the Internet (see this month's Hocus Pocus).

Days before the code was released, Nintendo made an announcement on their website that "The code was coming..." At first, we reacted with ambivalence, because who cares about a stinkin' code, right? But after receiving the Chicken of the Month... ECM underwent a miraculous change, becoming a carefree, happy, optimistic (but still short) little man. We shall call him MCE. When not playing

with kids at the orphanage, MCE feeds the homeless, and houses stray animals

Think you've got what it takes to be GF's "Sausage of the Month?" Send your picture and sob story care of the Postmeister, and you too can be laughed at — I mean looked up month!



Although honorable mention goes to Cerberus' expense-paid trip to Japan, courtesy of Square (see Japan Now), this month's

MARI EPISODE I

ELECTRONIC NABOO' FIGHTER

# The Battle Continues.



# Your Fate is Sealed.



# Power Stone







CONSTRUCTION 665669 Page 35556

Originality



**Evil Zone** PlayStation

Titus Fighting

Final Fantasy VIII PlayStation Square EA Role-Playing

skip this "next gen power" 18 8 8 9 7 9 7 18 18 8 9 9 8 85



PlayStation Electronic Arts

**8886987** 

but not a must-own game. 86 86 8 9 8 5 7 81



Command & Conquer Nintendo 64 Nintendo Strategy

5 5 78

Duke Nukem: Zero Hour Nintendo 64 GT Interactive Adventure

WWW.GAMEFAN.COM

70

886008

**33337685** 







**MGS Integral** 9899692 10000 908949



















92270 53 85477 48 83362 50







9808098



78



98888789





King of Fighters 99 Dreamcast (Import)

SNK Fighting



6 (73)





6050505660999778













apcom — a name that is revered, cherished, and loved by gamers, from the lowlest of scrubs to the highest of inflip-gamers. While Capcom's titles encompass everything from action (Megaman) to adventure (Resident Evil) to role-playing (Brestof of Fire), it was the advent of Street Fighter II that elevated Capcom to good-like status. This single fighting game began Capcom's reign as the undisputed king of 2D lighting games (sho by, I can already see the flaming

e-mails to come from SNK faithfuls). 3D is a realm that Capcom has explored with minimal success because. (1) 3D flighting masters Sega and Namco are firmly entrenched in their VF and Tekken bunkers and (2) none of Capcom's 3D flighting games have the same innovation or impact as Street Fighter II did. No 3D Capcom game can

compete in terms of gameplay, graphics, and innovation, compared to the likes of the Virtua Fighter 3tb or Tekken 3. That is, until now...





RYRME

Hometown: Oeda

Ayame is a very fast but weak fighter. Her 100 Flower Fusion attack (left) is very easy to dodge and her Cherry Blossom Dance (below, right) won't hit if you're

too far away. Inspired By: Ryo-Ohki from Tenchi and any annovingly cute anime girl (i.e. Shampoo)

Something Different For A Change
For those who've lost contact with the video game world, be it because you've been living in a rold, dark cave or just playing FeverOuset, Power Stone is Capcom's latest forey into the flighting realm, and with it comes change, significant knape, 20 sprinter give way to 30 polygonal power. Two-dimensional planes have grown to become three-dimensional, free-coming environments. And the most drastic stray from the one is the lack of blocking. Scale yill shall be considered to the flighting games. Be the same as all other flighting games, the same as all other flighting games and the same consideration of the flighting games. Be the same as all other flighting games are sufficiently and the same sufficiently games. Be the same are all other flighting games, the same sufficiently games are sufficiently games and the same sufficient games and the same layers are sufficiently games and the same sufficiently games and the same sufficiently games and the same sufficiently games are sufficiently games and the same sufficiently games and the same sufficiently games are sufficiently games and the same sufficiently games and the same sufficiently games and the same sufficiently games are sufficiently games and games gam

have some dangerous elements thrown in as well whether it's lamps that can be dislodged, or a conveyer belt leading to a meat-grinder.

But the greatest weapons at your dis-posal are power stones. Every fighter eeks the legendary power stones, which have the ability to make anyone's dream come true. And on the battle-

field, once a fight-





er gets the red, yellow, and blue power stones, a shining transformation takes place, as that fighter assumes his/her Power Drive form. In this form, a Power Drive meter appears at the bottom of the screen which slowly drains as time goes by. Once in Power Drive form, the fighter acquires incredible powers: resistance to almost any kind of attack and







Ryoma's main strength lies in his range, which is extended by the katana he wields. His Midare Zantou (left) doesn't do a lot of damage, but it's hard to avoid while his Tenchi Ryoudan (up, right) does good damage, though only at close range.

Inspired by: Yojimbo and The Silver Samurai from Marvel Comics TM.



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# ROUGE

Hometown: Mahdad The sexy lady may not be in the top tier of fighters, but her three Fusion attacks are very cool. Her Great Fire (not pictured) has a large area of affect, her Love Dance (below, right) does good damage, and her aerial Skull Fire (left) is one of the bestlooking Power Fusions in the game. Inspired by: Firestar (Spiderman and his Amazing Friends) and Jasmine (Aladdin).





laughing whenever I flatten an opponent with a mailet. 2D purists will find it very hard not to like Power Stone's Saturday morning cartoon look, and those that do, I suggest you crawl back to your hole and cover it with a big rock.

The most amazing thing about the visuals isn't the blazing special effects, the screaming framerate, or the uncanny attention to detail. Sculpting a 3D world, filled with objects to manhandle and pounce off of, while not suffering from visual difficulties is one tough job. Ehrgeiz, the only other game similar to Power Stone, pulled this off to game similar to rower stone, putted this off to some degree, but the camera in Ehrgeiz isn't as friendly as Power Stone's. While you probably won't notice it during the frantic, action-filled brawls, the camera is constantly shifting, moving, and zooming for the optimal view.

Power Stone also makes good use of Z-buffer-ing. Just make your character jump 'into' his lifebar, and you'll notice the bar dim out, enabling you to see where your character is. The same goes for objects like poles and beams that might block the player's view; they'll just "phase out" so you can see through them. This "user-friendly" very important feature that allows the

player to concentrate on battle, rather than worry about where his character is. Because in a fighting game where you can't block, the last thing you want to worry about is not seeing your character.

**Tactical Fighting** 

So, Power Stone is a visual feast for the eyes. But how does it play, without blocking? I admit when I first played the test version of this game at Sunnyvale Golfland, I too questioned the decision to omit a block button. Now, after mastering the game's subtle intricacies, the mere thought of a block button in this game is unfathomable. Removing the option of blocking automatically makes this game fast-paced and action-packed. You have to be on your toes at all times, watching for an opponent's attack, while avoiding explosions and















Iometown: Tong-An ECM's favorite character is one of the best. His Great Dragon Ball (above, right) does good damage but ( is pretty easy to avoid, like his Heaven Military Dance (left). But both are ar eye-widening experience Inspired by: Wong Fei Hung (Once Upon a Time in China) and Gohan (Dragonball Z)



tage if you want to win.

But perhaps Power Stone's greatest accomplishment lies in the nature of the game. As noted above, there is a void in the 3D-fighting universe that's surrounded on either side by the hardcore VF players and the casual Tekken play

jump higher, or to launch yourself at a target. Even better, slamming enemies into walls will often cause paintings and other items to come crashing down! The level of background interaction is amazing, and Power Stone is one of the first fighting games in which you have to use the objects and environment to your advan-



ers. Power Stone fills this void by offering both parties a fighting game that is more tactiskill-based a weird

abusing jump kloks, depleting the Power Drive meter, and button mashing. At this early level of play, Power Fusion attacks are used as soon as all three Power Stones are acquired. After playing play, rower fastion states are acquired. After playing for some time, Power Stone becomes a tactical for some time, Power Stone becomes a tactical for some time, Power Stone becomes a tactical for power some time of the power som practice for hours on end. The game is balanced enough that both types of players will appreciate it for being innovative and extremely fun.

Music in fighting games has always been impor-tant to me, as the right kind of music at the right time can double the pleasure of a gaming experi-sions. Power Stone is no exception, whether it's the excellent voice-acting of the characters or the classical arrangement of the music. Every char-acter is distinct in design, and the voice-acting and music truly enhance their personality even the driving smare depth before the personality over the driving smare depth has been according to fluid the property of the property of the like home is Kraden to the measured clanking of Gunrock, sach character's sounds add a let to their personality, probably merses than any fight-ing game since the days of SPL. The sound effects are of equal caliber to the Music in fighting games has always been impor-

The sound effects are of equal caliber to the graphics, meaning they're frickin' awesome. From the resonating boom of a rocket explosion, to the bone-crushing snap of a wooden crate crashing into a target, the realism is incredible. It just seems like there's nothing wrong with Power Stone, right?

Power Stone - The DC's diamond in the rough You're probably wondering how can I heap all this praise upon Power Stone without touching upon the game's flaws; fortunately, they're few and far between. One of the problems is the computer Al. Capcom fighting games aren't known for being

particularly hard, but sometimes in PS, the computer Al will 'slip' - I've caught the computer running to

DANGOHEAD: THE BEGIN- DEVELOPER - CAPCOM 1-2 PLAYERS NING OF A NEW LEGEND PUBLISHER - CAPCOM AVAILABLE 9/9/99

VIEWPOINT:95



VALGAS

Hometown: Avalon Valgas is one mean mutha. He possesses great strength (equal to Gunrock) and extremely fast for his size. His moves in Power Drive form are also powerful, whether it's his Energy Maximum (left) or his Meteo Chain (below, right). Inspired by: Biff Tannen (Back

to the Future)



e a power stone will materialize before it hap Also, the computer will do stupid things on occasion, like jump up and down in the

same place. Power Stone's biggest flaw lies not in what it has, but in what it doesn't have. An Internet link-up mode, so you can play versus friends online should've play versus menos online should verbeen implemented. I would've liked to have seen more gameplay options different from the arcade (e.g. Quest Mode). And lastly, while there are a lot of methods to attack your target, more normai special moves would've been













As Capcom's first fighting game on the Dreamcast, not only is Power Stone a quality

product, but only in a fower Stone a quality product but its ground treating for a first generation title. Players will be meamerized with the wonderful graphics, excellent music, and simple yet-complex generation, the one thing that anazes me is now much more you learn every time you play Power Stone. It's well known that people have kept reading Myamoro Musashi's Book of Five Rings because every time they read it, they discover some new insight that they hadn't seen before. Each time! pick up Power Stone, Is well seen to the power stone, and marvel at its deazling colors and appreciate its worth. But only experienced appraises will shape the gent to their liking, finding the right analyses will enjoy Power Stone for the impressive graphics, cool moves, and simple gameplay. But for those hardy adventurers who look beyond the simple gamepley and see the deep strategy, take the time to find and learn new techniques on an gaze deep within the "center of the

techniques, and gaze deep within the "center of the gem," this treasure is theirs to keep.

To this day, Dangohead claims he pulled his punches against ECM in the second round of the E3 Power Stone Tournament... though he has been known to refer to himself as a handsome man as well.









After defeating Valgas, you face an abomination even worst than... well, actually it's just a powered-up Valgas The Hutt. While he moves slowly, Final Valgas has some very powerful attacks. He can slap any foolish fighter into the wall, spit green acid from his maw, or grab and bite you (left). From afar, he can fire a powerful beam onto the ground, which erupts into liquid-hot magma (above) or fire explosive crystals whose shards are hard to avoid. And if that weren't enough, he fields blows like ECM takes short jokes (in other words, A LOT).

VALGAS



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in the year of the RPG, the most talked about title is Final Fantasy VIII. Selling a staggering 2.5 million copies in four days to RPG-mad Japanese fans, this is the RPG world heavyweight champ. The flagship title from Square EA, FFVIII is the follow-up to the megapopular FFVII, which received scores of 100+, 100+, and 100 in GameFan two years back. But does it live up to the hype? Turn the pages and find out, as GameFan reviews the most anticipated RPG of the year...







#### Confessions of a Square Addict

and innovations of this gigantic title...

Chapter 1: Trouble in Paradise... Ever since I played the Japanese version of Final Fantasy VIII earlier this year, peo-ple have been asking me, "Is FFVIII all that? Does it live up to the PR machine behind it? And is it better than Final Fantasy VIII" Now while I wanted to answer all these questions with a resounding "Yes! Of course!" and a look of disbelief...! couldn't. Something wasn't sitting right, and for the longest time, I couldn't put my finger on it. So I continued to write preview after preview, proclaiming the wonders

#### Chapter 2: The Breakdown

Seeking some sort of repose, I found a quiet spot where I could sort through my thoughts and find out what was bothering me with FFVIII. What follows is a category-by-category comparison of this game with its predecessor Final Fantasy VII (a game which I would've scored 100).

Story: The focal point of a true RPG, this is what should make the gamer want to continue playing, even after finishing the game. Whereas FFVII had a convoluted story which didn't really make sense, FFVIII is a straight shooter. Although it takes a while for VIII's plot to kick in (doesn't really happen till the end of disc 2), and you're fed the story in very brief snippets. Depending on your point of view, it could be seen as a murder mystery slowly unfolding... or a master throwing his dog a Scooby Snack every so often. Although it develops a little slowly, the story in VIII is better than VII

In-Game Graphics: While graphics shouldn't be a selling point for an RPG, they are important. Square knows how to deliver the goods here - FFVII and VIII are two of the best looking PlayStation games to this day. The pre-rendered backgrounds which you've seen in Final Fantasy VII, Resident Evil 2, and Parasite Eve are back. with a vengeance; this time covering exotic, yet realistic locales such as: the ruins of Trabadia Garden (a city devastated by a missile strike), the lighthouse near Edea's beach house, or the coastal getaway town of Balamb (reminiscent of Costa Del Sol in FFVII). Plus, the backgrounds now have more ambient effects (such as animation. and lighting) than ever before.

Characters are now full-sized, having grown up and abandoned their superdeformed roots. While I'm not crazy about the full-bodied look, it's really important to many people. I've heard people express interest in playing the game now that the characters aren't short and squat any more; and it's more consistent when they're the same size in town, CG, and battle, as opposed to VII, in which they switched from SD to normal-sized frequently. With an extra two years of experience under their belt, the artists at Square have sculpted what's arguably the best looking domestic PlayStation title this year. Score another point for FFVIII.











EGGO: THE, UH. DEVELOPER - SQUARESOFT 1 PLAYER W-EIGHT IS OVER. PUBLISHER - SQUARE EA AVAILABLE SEPT. 7TH

VIEWPOINT : 88

Compute Graphies: Square RPGs are becoming more cinematic and mainstream with every outing; just look at games like Parasite Eve, FPUIII, and Vegrant Story. This is also because Square's CG artists are among the best in the biz. Every time a CG sequence comes up, people wandering by stop to gawk and sak questions. As with the in-game graphics, the CG has gotten better with time, and FFVIII does more of that meshing polygon characters with CG and ever before. Every time the graphics switch from pre-ron-dered to CG or back, I'm left in jaw-dropping awe. Speaking of jaw-dropping, EVVIII has a CG ending which is just mind-blowing to could be the best ending you'll ever see in a video game. FFVIII wins this category hands-down.





Music. This has been a classic gape ever since the series debuted on the PlayStation. I liked Nobio Uematasia 6 Ish defrate (FFI) and III much more than his 32-bit work (FFVII and VIII). Both VIII and VIII had been more than bis 32-bit work (FFVII and VIII). Both VIII and VIII had been more than the series of FFII or III, assuming you played them back in the day. I once wore that if the benard to go back and play a game like FFII today, with games looking as good as Sonic Adventure, Power Stone, and Shen Mus out there. Well, when I started playing FFII (VIII in Japan) in Final Fantasy Collection, I quickly at those words because the game still plays well, and the music it is a good that I keep laying just to hear more. I nearly weep upon hearing Nobio in his office again, and you too, can take a stort of the service of the

Anthology later this year (although //isrt in t., grr...).
Enough dwelling on the past; like I said earlier, VIII has its moments. The sword fight in the intro between Squall and Selfer is set to the best music track in the game — Liberi Fatali, which marks the return of the 'Sephiroth choir (good to see they're still getting work). Also, famous Hong Kong pop singer and professional music sampler, Faye Wong, sings the game's themelove son, £yes on Me. Faye's my tavorite HK singer, so it's no surprise that £yes on Me gats lots of play time from me (much to the chagfin of the other GF staffers). But once you get beyond Liberi and £yes, most of the music in FFVIII is pretty sleepy. VII's soundtrack wasn't exactly mind-blowing, but it had more good songs than VIII, so score this one for VII.







# TASYVIII

Characters: I saya Nomure, character designer for this game, is sho known for his work in FFWI and Parasite Eve. This time out, similar to PE. the characters real every much based in reality. You'll get no guys with guns for a han! fike Barret or taking dogs like Red XIII. They're all normalizating old the say to the state without a second glance, well, maybe Edea would warrant a state, but not the rest of 'em. I didn't mind the 'warrage guy! look of Parasite Eve, because it was set in the urban landscape of New York. But lest I checked, there's a "fantasy" in this series' itle. So where exactly is the fantasy in this Fantasy? What's with the high-tech scenery and realism? They should've named the game Final Phantasy intest.







Unfortunately, I don't like the realism of the characters in this game, and I don't like their personalities. I can't shake the feeling of déjà vu either. Squall is like Cloud with brown hair, a scar, and a trigger on his sword. The Moombas are distant relatives of Red XIII. And Rinca is like Tifa in a blue dress. At least FF/VII's characters were somewhat original the first time around. Not only that, but I can't stand Squall's personality. To every question or statement he comes across, his reaction is always the same, spathy, but can't stand Squall's personality. To every question or statement he comes across, his reaction is always the same, spathy, but can't stand squall's personality. To every question or statement had come statement to the same spathy. I like the same spathy and the same spathy and the same spathy and the same spath and the majority of the same spathy and the same spathy and the same spath and the same spathy. I like the same spath and the same

Innovation/Gameplay: FF/III brings many new ideas to the table when it comes to gemeplay. Left's start with major when it comes to gemeplay. Left's start with major so replies have system of keeping track of MPs and using ethers to repliensh your mann has been replaced with single-use magic spells and preinhable callers. I'll get to the callers later, but magic is now drawn out of monsters in combat or taken from draw points in towns. While it was incombat or taken from draw points in towns. While it was incombat or taken from draw points in the final, Single draws can land you over 10 spells at a time, plus it happens faster, so you don't have to sit in a battle for eternity trying to 'earn' magic. I pre-orn' magic. I per arm' magic.

fer the magic system of old, but drawing isn't too bad.

While drawing is now convenient, junctioning is a major hassle. I'm all for customizing my RPGs, and I loved the level of detail in Star Ocean: The Second Story. But the customizing in SO:TSS was completely voluntary, meaning you didn't need to do it to beat the game; unfortunately, junctioning is required to do anything in FFVIII. Without guardian forces junctioned to magic spells and whatnot your characters enter battle with only one command: fight. You can't even use The hassle comes items! when GFs are mysteriously removed without warning during the course of the game. This usually happens

after a major event or when you switch control to another party. Then you have to go back and re-equip everybody again, lest you ruther risk of entering battle with only the "fight" command. The worst part is, normal weapons are severely under-

p o w e r e d until the end of the game, when they become significantly upgraded. So playing without junctioning your GFs is just impossible. Another

problem brought on by innova-



tion is play balance. As I mentioned earlier, normal atacks are incredibly weak early in the game, dealing,50 or so points of damage. On the other hand, if you use a Guardian Force caller like Shive, you can essily deal damage in excess of 1000 points. The trick is learning an ability called "boost" which increases the amount of damage our caller loces, depending on how fast you tap the button. With a good boost, you can deal more than double damage with every GF summon.

Every time Kidfan welked by me as played this game, he'd see me jamming away on a button as bloosted my Gr. "What is this. Track and Field 2000?" he'd say, And, in a way, he had a point because much of the "gameplay" in FFVIII consists of rapid button presses and continually summoning GFs. This is disturbing, considering GFs are so much more powerful than normal attacks or regular magic. Game balance just isn't there if you want to finish the game with a clock time less than 995% FFVIII, on the other hand, was balanced enough that you could go through the game eyish consistent of the summons, magic, or fighting with weapons. Despite the many attempts at innovation in FFVIII, crodit FFVII with having the better, more balanced gameplay. Vi was also quite innovative, with the dramatic battle camera angles, over-the-top caller spells, and the cinematic feel.

#### Final Score: a 3-3 tie between FFVII and FFVIII.

So after analyzing it category by category, I still couldn't decide whether FF/III was better than III. Something was amiss... something I couldn't put my finger on. By the way, if the comparison seems a bit harsh, it's because I'm comparing FF/III to a game which I would've scored 100. So keep that in mind.

# FINALF







#### Chapter 3: Revelation

Then one day, I received the e-mail. Sent by someone known only as Riisuke, its subject line gave voice to the nameless feeling that continued to trouble me. The subject was simply, "Does FFVIII have soul?" And just like that, I had found what it was — the problem that continuthat, man leads with the strength of the stren





a problem.

TASY



Don't get me wrong. There are definitely memorable moments in the game that make it worth playing, such as the ends of all the discs, or the first time you see the new Tenberry and Cactrot (I'll leave those as surprises for you). But that intangible element of "soul" is missing from this game. If you haven't rlayed some of the classic RPGs, then you won't understand what I'm talking about. But I hope you have. Then you'll see that Final Fantasy VIII is

a good game... but not a great one, not compared to the classics. There are two Final Fantasy titles coming out this season. And while FFVIII is worth playing, Final Fantasy Anthology is the better of the two.

Shortly after completing this review, Eggo went into hiding somewhere in Canada, seeking refuge from angry mobs of torch-bearing Square-heads.



NO CELL PHONES

GAME I HOPE...

It's been a while since I've played a game that's challenged me as much as Driver. Put it this way. The game's training mission, which you have to pass in order to start the actual game, is pretty difficult, especially if you're plcking up the game for the first time. After much ribbing from my backseat gaming co-workers and wrecking countless cars, I finally focused my infig skills, the moons were in your good to the proper start of passage into driving manhood.

Once you pass that kidney stone of a training mission, you start receiving assignments on the answering machine in Tanner's apartment. Dh yeah, if you're new to this whole Driver thing, you play Tanner, an undercover cop posing as a behind-the-wheel bad guy. —Stoney bad guy. —He had be behind the-wheel bad guy. —Casap!» I know what you're thinking… Iwin' in LA, Eggo must be used to criminals behind the wheel. Oh no, Tanner iant your ordinary punk who cuts you drand follows it up with obscene gestures. Instead, as the guy driving the getaway art of the properties o

minus the pursuing helicopters.
To their credit, Reflections has soulgted an amazingly realistic game here. Drive's four cities (Milam), Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco) are modeled after the actual city locales; there are working stoplights at every intersection; and all the NPC cars obey the standard rules of traffic. But just because the city dard rules of traffic. But just because the city.

ian cars obey the law doesn't mean they all drive the same. There's the granny drivers, the "they must be drunk" drivers, the speed demons, the easily passed, and... <dum dum dum> the fuzz! The heat, pigs, smokey... whatever you call 'em, the police are bad news for a heelman trying to make a clean getaway. They'll cling to you like frosting on a donut, pursuing you to the ends of the earth... or until their car gets so totaled that they can't follow any more. There's nothing like the feeling of swerving to avoid an oncoming car, then looking behind you and seeing a cop eat it. You can almost see him shaking his fist in frustration as you pull away... But just because you avoided one cop, or even two, doesn't mean the backup won't get you, or that roadblock up ahead... Being chased O.J.-style by a police caravan and rushing to a destination is exhilarating to a point, but that adrenaline rush wears off when you see how repetitious the missions become. Two minutes to get from point A to point B with cops on my tail? Hmm... seems an awful lot like the assignment before that... and the one before that... Because the gameplay is monotonous, Driver doesn't rise above mediocrity. Even the director's cam, which lets you record your exploits and view it from different camera angles (like a music video), doesn't make this game worthy of a purchase.

Eggo frequently avoids near-crashes, cuts people off, and dodges cops driving to work everyday.

A۷

ELM



VIEWPOINT: 76

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THIS IS THE HEART.





### THIS IS THE SOUL.









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When the state of the state of

here and abroad in the soundtrack for XL<sup>2</sup>. Well, Pygnoseis currently adolg the finishing touches to WipeOut 3, and you'v all heard the phrase 'third time's the charm... Too many sequels surface with only minor changes from that respective presures. I san't stress enough how I have bely not seemed to be a surface of the property of massive improvements over WipeOut don't compa thassive improvements over report of comparing the hige jump that is WipeOut 3. Every possible aspect of the gehas been reconstructed in some shape or form. The higher olution is obvious as soon as you see the game. There new ing teams — Asseqai, Goteki, and learus — bring the total nu ber of teams up to eight. All the existing team's crafts have bee redesigned and look better than ever. A dozen weapons (seven new, five old) aid you while driving through eight new courses in four racing classes. The ultra speedy Rapier and Phantom classes scream along faster than ever before. World-renowned Al Sestic has been user

0.37

war was a war will go be mach , who had not so we of my forests and with MyseCur 3, it will continue to easily and with MyseCur 3, it will continue to entire in the normal war will be of insured by played games. May, "Be use it is incredibly fun to play. I bloked up WOS and played it for practically an entire day, and this is a far form-complete preview wersion. A split-screen vertical or horizontal two-player mode doubles the fun and doesn't till the Farine' are or presentation, though not all this place are in place yet. Only vertical split-screen was available to the place of the Myos and the place of the Myos are set of the Myos are set of the Myos and the place of the Myos are set of the Myos and the place of the Myos and the Myos



I picked up W03 and played it for practically an entire day...

TRAVEY RACING AT ITS BEST!

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CERBERUS: ANTI-GRAVITY DEVELOPER - PSYGNOSIS 1-2 PLAYERS PUBLISHER - PSYGNOSIS AVAILABLE WINTER





here's a ton of stuff I want to do before I die and there are a couple of things in life I wish I could do, but aren't possible. One would be to ride hover-boards like the ones seen in Back to the Future; the other is to man those super-sonic speederbikes seen in Return of the Jedi or maybe something



similar. I know I'm more likely to become a millionaire before ever riding either hover-boards or speeder-bikes. So I'll take what I can get, and Jet Moto 3 is a pretty good depiction of what it'd be like jetting through a narrow canyon at breakneck speeds. A game has to sell good numbers for a publisher to even consider pursuing a sequel; a third game, more than not, signifies that a franchise must be kickin' butt to continue. Jet Moto must have a large following of players. I can see why; there's a lot to like about this game. Jet Moto 3 pushes the mark set by the

first two games even further. 989 Studios has a brand new 3D engine that is more efficient, increasing performance drastically. What this means to you and me are sharper textures and larger courses with a game running at about 30 frames per sec-ond. Courses can range from volcanic islands to desert wastelands to frozen raceways. Close to a dozen bikes and riders will give enough selection for acceleration, too speed, and handling - but how does a hover-



craft handle at all if it's not on the ground? I can't tell you how a hovercraft can handle. but I can tell you that the control is perfect.

Jet Moto 3 supports digital and analog support. I prefer the precision of the analog control. Thumb sticks control your pitch and yaw. The L1 and R1 buttons shift the rider from side to side. While airborne the L1 and R1 buttons control your roll 989 has made a step in the right

direction with the course designs

for Jet Moto 3, Each course has more of a race course feel instead of a sense of being put together haphazardly by some wayward designer. The courses found in the previous games in the series felt more like obstacle courses than racetracks. 2-Player mode runs at a speedy pace, but for me this is strictly a one-player affair. Not that 2-player mode isn't fun, I'm just selfish. G















## Get Ready to Rumble on the N64!

- \$\infty 27 HUGE, twisted levels including three N64-exclusive levels
- & Brand new TONGUE SWING found only on the N64
- A Ride vehicles including tanks, burros, kangaroos and crocodiles
- All-new costumes give GEX more powers and weapons to fight evil
- Three secret playable characters and loads of hidden surprises
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"GEX 3 tailwhips all the right buttons —variety, humor, depth, and graphics" NINTENDO POWER











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ercenaries; intrigue; the end of the world; and guns, guns, guns! What nore could a gamer ask for?

Fear. Factor will attempt to deliver an exciting adventure reaturing all of these components... and maybe a few more surprises, to boot.

You have received word that a powerful Chinese businessman's daughter has gone on the lam. Smelling an opportunity, you and you partner decide to go in, locate the girl, and then ransom

her back to the old guy. Seems like an easy enough job for a top-notch bunch of ercenaries like yourselves. Ahh, but e best laid plans...

Very quickly, things begin to go wrong. You come under heavy fire almost imme-diately, losing your helicopter (and only means of escape from a huge skyscraper) before you are even situated on scraper) before you are even situated on the roof. You get split up from your part-ner and then, as if things weren't already bad enough, it starts to get weird. really weird. A quick

kidnapping has turned into a full-scale battle to survive and to save the world.

Exciting stuff, to say the least. Fear Factor plans to pull off this adrenaline-soaked adventure by connecting each level with a set of seamless movies meant to not only propel the action, but tell the

story as well. The anime-style presentation will interest many gamers and really helps set the "neo-megalopolis backdrop which Fear Factor is set in. This story could easily be taking place in the same universe as Shadowrun, Blade Runner, or Akira.

Much like Tomb Raider, or even Resident Evil for that matter, there is plenty of skulking around, trying to cutwit enemies and navigate treacherous ter-

rain. There is plenty of blasting, too.
You're a double fisted, gun-toting bad-ass, John Woo-style, so expect the blood to flow like rivers when things get hairy. A great little feature is a new weapon Al that will help target enemies as you swivel around in combat.

You will periodically switch roles, from one mercenary to the other, throughout the game. The switches take place during the aforementioned cut scenes and greatly help in the presentation of Fear Factor as an interactive movie. The goal is to have each of the mercs

play differently, adding depth and variety to the title.
While Fear Factor may not have what it takes to topple

Lara as the newest Eidos franchise, it certainly opens up the opportunity for Eidos to focus on what is, quite frankly, an infinitely more interesting parallel universe. Expect to hear some buzz around this game in the coming months.





No call for an "intervention" meeting. The meeting went view and in related with digit need 20 in order to lead a happy, fulfilling life. To help me kick the habit, Wake suggested that I start playing a game called EverQues, to curb my cravings... Like a recovered alcoholic, I sat at the Activision party and watched the developers demothe PlayStation version of Quake 2, leery all the while. I wasn't going to play to because I know the kind of trouble that it represented. And the woulds successfully avoided it all night if it weren't for the fact that Activism was not releasing early copies of the game, so the only way for GameFan to have a chance to preview it was for me to play, being the only GF ed there. So I had to take one for the team... It's like riding a bike, or so they say, although I wasn't able to bring my "A" game

because the PlayStation version has all new deathmatch levels. While I can't say that the design was better than the original DM maps, they will certainly offer a fine mix of strategy and excitement for those unfamiliar with The Edge, Tokay's Towers, and The Frag Pipe. The maps are small, in order to keep the game from bogging, and you won't run into the problem of too much open space for multi-player (GoldenEye's one weak point).

Surprisingly, this version runs better than the N64 one. There is little to no slowdown in either the one player contest or deathmatch, and all of the weapons retain the proper special effects (dig that railgun trail!). At this point the only problems I have encountered deal with control. Don't panic, this is not to say the game controls poorly, because it doesn't. However, veteran Q2-ers will notice that making the everimportant 180 spin shot is now next to impossible; the PlayStation pad wasn't built for that kind of speedy movement and control, so expect to take a rocket up the kiester more frequently

Quake 2 is one of the greatest pure gameplay experiences ever, and this version manages to embody most of what made the PC version a classic. For those of you who have yet to experience *Quake 2* on a computer, definitely get excited about this. The PlayStation needs a good corridor shooter.

Oh, by the way, I managed to avoid becoming re-addicted after my brief relapse at the Activision party. Now if you'll excuse me, EverQuest awaits... EN



DEVELOPER - HAMMERHEAD 1-4 PLAYERS PUBLISHER - ACTIVISION AVAILABLE FALL FRAG. THAT IS THE QUESTION-

EL NIÑO: TO FRAG OR NOT TO

n a genre more stale than a month old cookie, it is refreshing to see a title that dares to be different. No cars, no motorcycles, no hover boards... just snowmobiles. Although it may strike some as unusual that EA would develop a title that wasn't connected to some over-hyped license, this would-be niche game will undoubtedly be marketed out the wazoo, showing up on every ESPN2 commercial break and being slammed down our throats. This would be agitating if it wasn't for the fact that Sled Storm is deserving of as much publicity as it can garner.

This is one helluva fun game, folks. Not only is it novel to be able to race snowmobiles, but the quality of the game is exceptional, giving it the kind of longevity that, quite frankly, many racing games lack. For starters, the graphics are stellar. Not only do the backgrounds and ski-doos look great, the frame-rate is



running at about 30, dropping nary a bit in split-screen mode (3 and 4-player modes are a different story...). And night, snow and rain add a nice atmospheric effect, as well.

The gameplay is what highlights Sled Storm, though. The control is responsive and the physics give the sleds a very real feel. The trick mechanism is easy to use (although don't expect the tricks to be very dazzling... they are on a snowmobile, after all), and the track design is wonderful, making each course challenging as well as including many hidden shortcuts and alternate routes.

There are a total of 14 tracks, divided into two sets of courses: Open Mountain and SnoCross. The Open Mountain tracks offer more exciting challenges, as they are cut

right out of the surroundings, while the SnoCross tracks are artificial, designed for circuit racing.

A Championship Mode will allow you to race through a season while upgrading your sled, using

money you earn from victories and tricks. The number of possible upgrades is plentiful, and when you max out your sled, expect that thing to blaze! Also of note is the game's soundtrack, which includes remixes of such songs as Rob Zombie's Dragula and Econoline Crush's Surefire. Great music to get you in the racing mood...

led Storm is a fantastic racing game that shouldn't be missed by anyone. An exciting and challenging title, it is sure to keep you busy for many, many hours. Sied Storm's well worth the price.

Not since his days in his mountain pueblo has E Niño seen snow drifts so deep













SWEEPSTAKES

Grand Prize: A 3-day trip for two to Salt Lake City, Utah; an Exclusive Gex 3<sup>™</sup> Snowboard from Five Axis™; 2 copies of Gex 3™ video game

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coording to the Chinese calendar, 1999 will be the year of the Army Men Or at least 300 would certainly like to think so. This year will see at least e and spins off into a free roaming shooter not un The main difference here would be that you're not capping terrorist

tack introduces Captain, leader of the Air Cavairy and all-around good ong with Sarrie, both Green warriors will save prisoners of war, com-yet missions, and wreak havoc on the Tan forces. Melting Tan army task of real people is a good edge for 3DO. What safer way to avoid problem from the get-go. Instead of battles over Iraq, Air Attack takes ds, and backyards.

A stable of four choppers (Apache, Chinook, Super Stallion and a at the Captain's disposal through 18 one and two-player missions the helicopters has very specific characteristics. For instance, the Huey is fast but won't take as much of a beating as the Super Stallion or Ar five co-pilots can also affect the feel of your craft and the su mission. All 18 missions can be played in 2-played mode. The four other 2-player modes are of

a fusion of battle with the age old game. Kinda cool idea if you ask ighting for control of the Tic squares. Wanton destruction reigns ontrol of the Tic squares. Wanton destruction reigns d, both players must demolish as much as possible in a

first player to reach a total wins

monly used grappling device for heli

# Melting tan army men instead of real people is a good edge.

# RMYMD









DEVELOPER - STUDIO 3DO STRIKE MEETS SMALL SOLDIERS! PUBLISHER - THE 3DO COMPANY AVAILABLE WINTER







treets of Rage almost became a Sealty on the PlayStation and Saturn. Core and Sega were once in talks about taking the Streets of Rage license and slapping it onto the Fighting Force engine. And we were that close to getting the next Streets of Rage. That fell through, and we ended up with a generic 3D action game. It was more or less a given that Core would design a follow up to the game — with or with-out a Streets of Rage license. It took a while, but Fighting Force 2 is close





a while, but Fighting Force 2 is close to being dane. In an age when prequels and sequels are developed in landern, or so it seems anyway, it's nice to see a developer take its time. I don't think Fighting Force 15 going to be the squely you were expecting. No longer is Fighting Force an all-out brawflest. This chapter in the series has gone the way. Metal force the squely the series of the state of the series of the s but now you can cap an enemy from afar if you don't fee like getting your hands dirty.

Hawk Mason is the only returnee from the original crew (oh how we miss Mace). And now the special ops agent has his hands full, dealing with the remnants of Zeng's syndicate. Nakamichi Corporation plans to make avai able a super-solider capable of all sorts of destruct As a CIA-hired gun, it's Hawk's job to find out exa

what is going on. Luckily, some serious firepower will be available to our merc. The list of weapons includes: assault rifles, grenade launchers, flameguns, rocket launchers, sniper rifles, shotguns, stun batons, and a load of other high powered weaponry. Too bad for you, the other team has the same firearms.

Our early glimpse of FF2 gave us the impression that it might give Syphon Filter a run for its money. At one point in the game, I had the opportunity to snipe a gorilla-sized enemy from a distance. Missing my headshot (I nailed him in the shoulder), I threw caution to the wind and ran up to finish the goon mano a mano. Dynamic play like this continually holds my interest. Lack of a 2-player mode will undoubtedly miff the Fighting Force contingent (all four of them), but hey it's a different game now... and from what I saw, a better one. Bring it on!



DEVELOPER - CORE 1 PLAYER PUBLISHER - EIDOS AVAILABLE 4TH QTR. DON'T FEEL LIKE GETTING YOUR HANDS DIRTY...

CERBERUS: CAP AN ENEMY FROM AFAR IF YOU

# 

COMING SOON COMING SOON COMING SOON COMING SOON COMING SOON COMING SOON











Test Drive Off-Road 3 (Accolade) Accolade's rugged racer goes to number three, with more insane tracks from the snowy peaks of the Himalayas to the bayous of New Orleans.











granddaddy of crash course racing with improved graphics and an absurd amount of cars.







Treasure, you can bet money that Silhouette Mirage will satisfy all us hungry hardcore gamers.















Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver (Eidos) Well, it's finally here! Vampires, soul sucking, and all that bloody stuff set in some of the most awesome looking environments. Let's just hope the wait was worth it.











UmJammer Lammy (Sony) Parappa fans, get ready for some rock n' roll! Take control of Lammy and string your way through each level playing Satriani-like melodies. Remember, it's all in the mind!



"Awesome original level design, enemies and bosses"
-Official PlayStation Magazine





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gh, my head hurts." Those are four words you don't want to come out of a reviewer's mouth after he's played your game. But alas, that's how I feel after squandering many an hour of my life trudging through the debacle that is Duke Nukem: Zero Hour.

What gets me is that this game actually showed promise. The graphics were nice and crisp (even though the frame-rate dropped to unhealthy levels in hi-res). The gunfights seemed exciting enough - blasting aliens and pig-cops to giblets, while talkin' smack all the way in classic Duke fashion. Heck, there were

even sexy babes to rescue. All that was missing was a shred of fun. This game sure knows how to make a strong first impression: nice-looking environments, plenty of speech, lots of action early on... But after you play it for an extended sitting, the tedium begins to set in. Monotony takes over, and that gameplay which promised to be like a first person shooter in 3D devolves... sigh> into switch-flipping, door-finding death. While I wanted to just save babes and perforate aliens. I'm stuck scouring small environments for that next card key... which opens that next door... which leads to the next switch... Since you're all avid readers of GameFan, you

must've all heard me cry foul before about the evils of switch-finding gameplay, of which ZH is a prime example. It's just disguised well, under the guise of being a Duke Nukem game.

As if the tedious gameplay weren't bad enough, he nail in Zero Hour's coffin is the control. In the preview of this game, I prayed that GT would take the time to fix the jumping play mechanic, because it was far too loose. Now it's reviewable hour and the platforming is guaranteed to keep the Hair Club for Men in business. For the Eggoimpaired, that last sentence translates to the most frustrating platforming jumps I've seen in a long time. Even fellow ninja gamer ECM, a fully certified platform fanatic, was missing jumps on more than one occasion.

In the end, however, jumping is the least of this game's worries. At first I thought it was mediocre ame's wornes. At hist it thought it was – a good looking game with average gameplay. But after spending over an hour searching for a key (not my idea of a good time), my estimation of Duke Nukem: Zero Hour dropped even further. I recommend staying far, far away from this game. Unless you're some sort of masochistic gamer who enjoys a good switch-flipper (is that an oxymoron?). I just hope that marketing and the N64 appeal don't sell enough copies of Zero Hour to warrant a sequel (it hap-

pened with Superman, it can hap with you!). In the classic words of a babe trapped in a bad game... me! Save me!"

Recently, Eggo spent an entire weekend tying himself to a lamp-post at Santa Monica and Vine and screaming, "Save mel Save mel"









· Unique combination of hand-drawn artwork and wonderful 3-D environments!









# ARMYMEN

ave you ever imagined being Sergeant Slaughter and whipping out a can of wupass on anything in your way? I'm wondering if anyone remembers Sergeant Slaughter, the WWF Superstar and G.I. Joe personality, but I digress... Army Men: Sarge's Heroes has platform elements with a bit of GoldenEye and Command & Conquer thrown in for good measure. Yes, it's another 3D0 title that hurls you headlong into the world of Army Men. his time around, you take command of the Sarge and his buddies in a 3D battlefield, both in single and multi-player modes.

and is nuclear in a 3D battlefield, both in 
what I like most about \$\$x\_{yy}\$ Heroes is the 
resemblance to older aroade games like like 
what I like most about \$\$x\_{yy}\$ Heroes is the 
resemblance to older aroade games like like 
warriors and Guerilla \( \textit{War}\) can still remember stopping by the local 7-11 to pick up a 
Slurpea and play kari \( \textit{Warriors}\) or Guerilla \( \textit{War}\) and 
still upso of Guerilla \( \textit{War}\) can 
still upso \( \textit{Var}\) to wise to 
schemy ect. The similarity to these old-school 
more in the first mission begins with the evil Tan army 
stacking the Green army base. As the Sarge, 
you must boate Colonel Grimm and escort him 
unless and fellow Army Men pattle it out as the 
Sarge runs from barrack to be track. You can 
lete out the Greens or go straight for your objec-

tive. Seing your side fight against the bad guys while you're doing your thing makes the game so realistic; it really makes you feel like a

makes the game so realistic; it-really makes you feel like a like

up to be a decent outing through the world of Army Men. C









## Nintendo must be on a real-time strategy kick!









ans of real-time strategy have all heard of Command & Conquer (C&C to those in the know). Whether these players like it or not is another story. for the PC even before Pentium technology was Westwood developed C& accessible reality. Dune was Westwood's original real-time strategy title, of from that mold came Command & Conquer. I was lucky enough to have and from that mold came Cor pen hired as a Product Analyst (read: tester) at Virgin Interactive prior to C&C asides games like Kyrandia and The 11<sup>th</sup> Hour, I also tested C&C and its subbugs was the last thing on the minds of Virgin sequent update packs. Finding testers, as we'd play network games into the early hours of the morning. Teams, no teams, NOD, GDI — the rules didn't matter, it was always more fun than should be humanly possible. Suffice it to say, I've logged in more hours on C&C than most human beings.

C&C has seen many battles on the Saturn and PlayStation. Yet no console ver-Cack has seement and under a man and any array that is a since have captured the game faithfully, with Rep Alert probably coming the classes. And now, Nintendo must be on a real-time strategy kick because C&C and StarCraft will be available before Christmass. Unlike prior attempts, C&C for the N84 has been completely rebuilt from the ground up. Polygonals surroundings and objects have repused the 2D backgrounds and

rendered sprites of before. It's an odd thing to see a console game look considerably superior to its PC counterpart. C&C is playable in two resolutions (medium and high), both of which are very sharp. Even better, the framerate doesn't deteriorate much under regular conditions. Though, later missions with full-scale wars do cause noticeable slow down and will chunk up. Every mission has been ported over, as have the expert-level Special Ops missions. No multi-players maps are offered because there's no multi-player mode; this is unfortunate considering C&C was a great network game. I guess that with no link option or modem available, we'll have to stick to the solo missions. The game is much more difficult without a mouse or keyboard; just try Special Ops and see

Any way you cut it, this is C&C - a great game, however old... at least to me. C&C has a good chance of doing well — a solid title, very fun and completely revamped for the N64, which is a definite plus. Got an N64 but no PC or PlayStation, you say? Well, you've got it made here.

Cerberus has given up his blue-haired ways and donned fatigues, combat boots, and a machete-but he still gets his ass kicked.













## TARTRAFT

aving 'lusted countless ogres in WarCraft II and making a pastime of slaying Lazarus for fun in Dablo, I've always looked forward to Blizzard's annual game of the year. StarCraft was no different – dining on zerglings for breaktest and marines for dessert, my dropshipped reaver armies were the stuff of legend. Over a year later, Nithendo and Blizzard are porting this former 'Game of the Year' to

y reports during this game's devi nent said that StarCraft would have a multi player aspect, but no details were being released. How could it be done? Without a link cable or a modem, would four player StarCraft battles take place in split-screens so small you'd need a GameFan magnifying glass (you know, the one you used to scrutinize the miniscule fonts of old GF layouts) to figure out what's happening?

Well, when Nintendo came by the office with a 70% complete version of StarCraft, the veil of secrecy was lifted, and the mystery was solved. Multi-player in StarCraft on the N64 is two players only (though you can have two additional computer play-ers)... and it's split-screen. Now I realize there really wasn't any other way for the fun machine to handle this dilemma, but sit back and think about it. A real-time strate-gy game, in which recon and surveillance are key, that lets you peep at what your opponent is doing? Ludicrous!

opponent is doing? Ludicrous:
Any N84 owner who's player dylayer GoldenEye to death in the past two years has evolved that wandering third eye which keeps track of where your opponent is and what he's doing at all times. New apply that "GoldenEye-eye" to StapCraft and much of the strategy in this strategy game becomes obsolete; I hope I don't jave to digit, screens on your television and agreed to paste cardboard dividens between the significance on your television and agreed to the significance on your television and agreed to the form of the sides of the room, don't you think that's a lot work for a single game?

In the property of the sides of

ters. That's quite a bonds, and it's probably the pression of all that speech into the cart which is taking this game so long to come out. In the 70% preview copy we saw, the sound was mostly unfinished. Also, the speech, which was present in the E3 ver-sion, wasn't in this cart, but the Brood War

addition more than makes up for the aural setback. The controls take some getting used to, but eventually you can adapt.

As a one-player game, StarCraft looks respectable, but as a multi-player RTS. that split-screen interface leaves much to be desired. I hope Nintendo has some ace up their sleeve in order to

make it more 'fair,' but we'll be back with the reviewable in a few... so stay tuned.



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The first blast wiped out your Space Center. In just 3 hours, the high-tech weapons satellite will strike again...It's your job to make sure that it doesn't.









Explosive adventure' Nintendo Power



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- Intense 3rd Person Action/Shooter
- Precision lasersighting aiming mechanism
- **♦** Immense 3D Environments
- Battle heavilyarmed Boss Chracters and "smart" enemies
- + Rumble Pak Support















rowing up in the '80s, whenever someone says something like "Voltron," a nostalgic wave of memories instantly overwhelms me. <sniff> Well, imagine my surprise when I popped in the faceless N64 cart and saw the Hot Wheels logo come up. It's been ages since I last thought about these popular die-cast collectible cars. Reading the press release, I saw terms like "danger changer" and "loop-the-loops" and all the memories came rushing back. We live in such a different time now... when I say "Matchbox," you're thinking "20" ... not toy cars. <sigh>

Getting back to the game (better corral my thoughts before I dive off an '80s nostalgia deep end), Hot Wheels Turbo Racing is a racer with a lot going for it: modern music, wacky track design, wild stunts, and the beloved Hot Wheels license. Primus, Mix Master Mike, and the Reverend Horton Heat are just some of the musical artists who've signed up for the N64 version of Hot Wheels TR. Yes, you heard that right — music by real artists on the N64! Err, once again getting back to the game, the track design isn't standard fare for a racing game. Portions of the course include Hot Wheels elements like loop-the-loops and crisscrosses, where cars run the risk of slamming into each other or getting knocked off course. These aren't exactly innovations for a driving game, but the first time you see a plastic loop-the-loop, you'll shed an '80s-lovin' tear.





### '...I saw terms like "danger changer" and "loop-the-loops" and all the memories came rushing back.

But HWTR isn't counting on licensing to be its only selling point; every race is packed with turn-and-burn stunts and high-speed collisions. Whenever you fly off a ramp at high speed. you're given a chance to strut your car-flipping stuff. Stunts like barrel rolls, somersaults, back flips, and 720 spins give you turbos, and the better the stunt, the more turbos you get. Every car has different stunt properties, with varying "flip-ability." Speaking of cars, there are over 40 famous Hot Wheels cars to choose from. There's also all the other good stuff you'd expect in a racing game: boost locations, hidden tracks, short cuts, power-ups, etc. For Sony fans, there's a PS version of Hot Wheels coming as well, and it's lookin' really good. In addition to sharp, clean graphics, the game sports CD-quality songs by the aforementioned artists and Metallica (though it's a song from their new album... <sob>). With the strong license, popular musicians, action-packed gameplay, and strong kiddy appeal, Hot Wheels should be flyin' off shelves this fall. We'll be back





with the final word soon. E

EGGO: GET 'EM WHILE DEVELOPER - STORMFRONT 1-2 PLAYERS THEY'RE, UM, HOT ... PUBLISHER - ELECTRONIC ARTS | AVAILABLE FALL







# love blasting an unknowing victim with a nuke... it's so gratifying!

anks are cool. No buts about it. Weighing in at over 50 tons, these bad boys can deal some serious damage. Now, manning a tank isn't anything new; some of the earliest games featured tanks — Combat and BattleZone. During the '80s we played Atari's Vindicators and SNK's Iron Tank, while the 16-bit era saw M-1 Abram's Battle Tank. As the first game of its kind on N64, 3DO's BattleTanx had some good ideas, but fell short in execution. It wasn't as fun as it could have been, particularly when compared to Namco's ultra-popular Tokyo Wars. I didn't feel compelled to continue playing; be it single or multi-player mode. I mean, when you're behind the wheel of a moving fortress, you want to feel power. There was no sense of power in BattleTanx, at least for me.

So, why do a sequel of a mediocre title? Well, there's only room for improvement... and what an improvement! Eye candy isn't what makes a game, but it sure does help. Texture depth is high, giving tanks and world objects a clean look. Another bonus is the increased speed of gameplay and smoother frame rate - even in four-player mode. Studio 3DO also added some more modes and a load of new tanks. My personal fave is the Flip-E Tank. This futuristic-looking behemoth can roll on its side strafestyle, to avoid oncoming projectiles or opposing tanks. Other newbie tanks include a Hovertank and the heavily armored Rhino tank

Gameplay remains faithful to the original, with improvements in all the right places. There's more gameplay balance. Stuff like the guided missiles are easier to control and not as much of a "thug tactics" weapon. More diversified weapons and power-up items help out in the balance department. I love blasting an unknowing victim with a nuke - it's so gratifying! That's power.

BattleTanx II is quite a departure from its predecessor. Polished to a degree that the original could only dream of BattleTanx II is that much easier to pick up and play. Twenty levels, 17 missions, 10 tank types, and seven game modes will promise to keep you busy for more than a couple of days. Get ready to have some friends over to blow things up co-op or deathmatch style. Remember - use the nuke as much as you can; you can thank me later.







DEVELOPER - STUDIO 3DO PUBLISHER - THE 3DO COMPANY AVAILABLE WINTER

1-4 PLAYERS

CERBERUS: TOKYO WARS FOR THE NINTENDO 64?

all me crazy, but I like the whole concept of being a super spy or member of a covert team. The PlayStation has its share of games of this kind, but the Nintendo 64 has been sorely lacking espionage games. Sure, there's been Mission Impossible and GoldenEye, but two

Impossible and coldentys, but we games aren't enough.

Enter Winback by NCD Court games aren't enough.

Enter Winback by NCD Court games aren't enough.

I Mission: Impossible than Mission: Impossible for the NS4 was. Out of nowhere, a company known for its simulation RPGs has somehow misnaged to develop what could be a his taken control of the gulf satellite, and they've already destroyed a space station. The government is pretty asset about it all, I know I would be. All is standard practice, a team of soldiers has been dispatched to clean things up. And us is common practice, things go horribly whom are MLA and and stop the terroriss.

I loved Goldentye, Metal Geer Solid, and Syphon Filter to a lesser segree. WinBack is one of the best looking NS4 games I've seen. The first mission's sky effects ere very convincing. Sounds are just as exceptions, which is not too common on NS4. You won't be disappointed with gemeplay either. Jean-tuc controls quite well end handles fireerms like a trained sniper.















## WinBack is one testoterone-filled ride through the eyes of a spy.

From the outset, he must escape from an enemy base. He has to find his way around and et the same time contend with a group of foot soldiers guarding the perimeter. The tension caused by the auto-camera engles and music nears that of a suspense move. Snesking from comer to corner will be necessary to make it out elive.

Any incomplete game isn't without flaws; WinBack desperately needs side-step buttons. Also, the view of Jean-Luc is obstructed by bad camera angles here and there. And enemies can't be shot as guickly as if this, he he he. Gemes early on in development, like WinBack, always get better, and I know WinBack will rock when it's available in the U.S. C

CERBERUS: SOLID SNAKE DEVELOPER - OMEGA FORCE 1-4 PLAYERS
WINDIAN MOONLIGHTS ON THE N64. PUBLISHER - KOEI AVAILABLE 4

AVAILABLE 4TH OTR.





What's are out-of-work cartoon star to do? Lounge armind on the couch all day, reliving his glory days on I'v while eating and developing a gut? Well, not if your girlfriend is She Devil. Not wanting to see Taz grow love handles, eshivers, She Devil gets him a job as a delivery bo, arr, devil. And lites when your thought your daily or the seed of the s just when you thought your delivery days were over. here come *Paperb*oy and *Taz Express* for the N64, prov-ing that courier games will never be in crisis in today's gaming world.

There's no other Warner Bros. character more suited

to shuttling packages from point A to point B than Taz. If anyone can get the job done in the fastest time!
[assuming he doesn't eat the package], it's Taz.
Everyone's favorite whirling dervish uses the patented
Tazmanian twist to blaze new tralls through hills, walls,

Tazmanian twist to blaze new trails through hills, walls, concrete... you name it, he smashes it. Of course, you'll have to take care of the Acme package you're carrying, because it wouldn't do to have Wile E. Coyote's bat wings arrive in a mangled state. Spasking of of Wile E. he's scheduled to make an appearance in this game, state Minister Mortian and Yosemite Sam. Thankfully, since Togemite Sam. Thankfully,

for the voices of these other characters, to really get you in the WB mood.

For a delivery game, Taz Express is surprisingly a 3D adventure rather than a bike ride of a game. In addition to the traditional Tazmani n spin move, he can run, jump, and at almost

his pati spits out the object in disgust). Gameplay-wise, and oversimplifying here, imagine Lara Croft











carrying a box everywhere she goes. Of course Taz Express is a lot sillier carrying a box verywhere is globs. Or course faz Express is a fut similar than Tamb Anidar, and the puzzles aren't deep mindbenders, but don't expect this to be a waik in the park. Parts of the game already look pretty challeng ing, considering this game is probably intended for a younger addience. Expect platforming elements and true tests of your dextenty. Although Taz Express is still early in development, much of the level design

and problem-solving are already in place and look promising so far. The way this title's shaping up, infogrames is quickly fleshing out a respectable library of Warner Bros. titles (Duck Dodgers is coming soon as well) that more than live up to the name. E

> DEVELOPER - ZED TWO, UK 1 PLAYER PUBLISHER - INFOGRAMES | AVAILABLE NOVEMBER | WITH THE DEVIL!

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EGGO: I'M DOWN









ex, the closest thing 3DO ever got to having a mascot didn't let a sinking ship bring him down. The little lizard made the painless leap from the dying 3DO to — not one — but two very successful consoles; I could mention the Saturn, but I said successful consoles. Anyway, Crystal Dynamics has its golden goose, or so it seems, and Gex 3: Deep Cover Gecko is the newest chapter in the Gex library of games.

It's not often that I get queasy playing a video game. The last time it happened was during a marathon session of GoldenEye — and I'm not the only person who got tunnel vision from that game [Eggo's note: Amen, brother!]. After playing Gex 3 for an hour, I had to stop and get a breath of fresh valley air (fer sure, dude!). GoldenEye causes dizziness because of motion; and Gex 3 got me nauseous because of the camera programmed by Satan himself. Not that G3 looks bad it's nice and bright with colorful lighting and the usual bells and whistles; however, Crystal Dynamics has to do something about its



busted camera. One second it'll be behind Gex and the next it'll be to his left or extreme right. Not good is all I need to say.

Once my head stopped spinning, I braved the game once more. Gex 3 has not an original idea anywhere to be found. Take every single super popular platform adventure game within the last four years, put em in a blender and guess what you. get? Yes, Gex 3; Shigeru Miyamoto, Chris and Tim Stamper, Yuji Naka, and Jason

### Does anyone really want to play the same level a billion times over?

Ruben should get some kind of royalty fee for this blatant rip-off of each of their particular games. With that said, I've decided that platformers have way too much going on these days. It all started with Banjo-Crapzooie, erm, I mean Kazooie. Does anyone really want to play the same level a billion times over? Why can't

they all be as amazing as Super Mario 64? So simple yet so complex. I can't bring myself to say Gex 3 is a bad game, just tired and very recycled. Never played a Gex game or a platformer for that matter? Then, hell, try this game, you'll love it. It's has a ton of stuff for you to like: voices, large worlds, good control, you name it. As for the rest of the civilized world, there's more to come and better at that

Cerberus can often be found near local arcades, wandering in circles, holding his head and muttering something about "camera angles.









VIEWPOINT:68 AVAILABLE NOW

# 

COMING SOON COMING SOON COMING SOON COMING SOON COMING SOON COMING SOON









Nuclear Strike (THQ) An old-favorite from the glorious 16-bit days returns on the N64. Control various vehicles as you thwart evil nations from starting a nuclear war.











Rayman, in which you control a robot without any arms and use his tractor beam to solve various puzzles.











Donkey Kong 64 (Rare) The crazy monkey of Nintendo comes with an all-new adventure complete with various minigames and classic platform gameplay. Definitely one of the most anticipated titles for the N64.











Perfect Dark (Rare) Goldeneye's reign as the best first person shooter on the N64 might be coming to an end with Perfect Dark's excellent mixture of first person shooting action with Blade Runner-like adventure.











Ogre Battle 64 (Nintendo) One of the longest RPG's on the SNES gets its turn on the N64: excellent graphics, classic gameplay, and a story to rival even the mighty FF Tactics. Stay tuned for more next issue.





ne first time I saw the original Vigilante 8 running on a PlayStation in the office. I was dumbfounded. The only things comparable in terms of pure jaw-dropping power on the PlayStation were Toshinden and Gran Turismo. What amazing graphics! Look at those textures! Those crazy lighting effects! That gratuitous lens flare! OK, maybe we could do without the lens flare, but I figured it'd be a while before another game came along that wowed me as much as V8 did. Now if you bet me that the sequel to Vigilante 8 would be as much a visual leap over the first as the original game was to Twisted Metal 2, I would've taken that bet... and lost. Of course this is the Dreamcast version of Vigilante 8: 2nd Offense we're talking about here, and there is a 96-bit disparity between hardware, but don't let those technicalities destroy my argument (I spent a long time coming up with the idea for this first paragraph, and I really don't want to rewrite it). This game is easily as impressive as its forefather back in the day, and the scary thing is Vigilante 8: 2nd Offense isn't close to being done yet

Still early in development, V8:20 is making converts already. You have to see this thing move at its sweet 60 fps to understand how exceptionally purty it looks right now. Lighting and smoke effects are much improved, and all the textures have that shockingly-clean, 128hit gloss. Even when viewing the game with

normal A/V inputs (instead of S-video or the VGA box), the game looks too good for the television that houses it. By the time it's complete, Activision is

planning for 12 interactive environments and 18 vehicles to vent your road rage with. The rev we have is so early that many levels don't have power-ups or environment effects in place yet. The physics, collision detection, and Z-buffering also need some work, but it certainly gives us a taste of what to look forward to later this year. Also noteworthy, just like the Nintendo 64 ver-sion of V8, Vigilante 8: 2nd Offense will have a ripping 4-player mode for bragging rights among your friends. Our preview copy only has two-player split-screen, but expect to go mano a mano... a mano a mano (?) when all's said and done.

Just think about this, one of Vigilante 8's environments was a ski resort which had an avalanche take place if certain events were seeing triagered. avalanche/snowboarding scene in Sonic Adventure, I can't wait to see Luxoflux's take on the ski resort in Vigilante 8: 2nd Offense, Unfortunately, reviewables won't be popping up for another few months. So feast on these screens and stay raptly attuned to any further rumblings













DEVELOPER - LUXOFLUX 1-4 PLAYERS PUBLISHER - ACTIVISION | AVAILABLE NOVEMBER | ENOUGH. (GROAN)

EGGO: V8 AIN'T



needs its own entry in the SH sweepstakes just to feel proud and be able to hold its head h when it goes down to the console watering hole after a hard day of entertaining 'little Jimmy. Enter CG's *Blue Stinger*, the first SH-esque title

ined by Carrier and riginator, Resident Evil When Blue Stinger arr its import form, I took a egative attitude



Evil was a one-of-a-kind experience, and every feeble t at the genre since then has only weakened my resolve ay through any more for fear of drowning in a sea of utter mediocrity (Silent Hill? A second-rate clone, and a pale shadow of the innovator- and that's being kind). However, during

# NGB

the recent summer game slowdown (that sad time of year when all the 'new' games are ones you didn't bother playing through back in the 4th quarter of the previous year), when new DC releases were about as frequent as Dangohead and dates (we call 'em victims around here). I popped open Blue Stinger, and much to my surprise it was pretty damned good. The story was Singer, and induct to my surprise was pretty ownered good. The sery real as bit, snapped (the English translation of the voices coupled with Japanese subtitles made for some interesting scenes... Including the Infamous beth-house sequence (vyipes)! but the game was remarkably fun, with a more solid emphasis on the action side of things than the original RE. If there was one thing about Blue Stinger that drove many to the brink of controllersnapping rage, it was what generous people might term "camera angles" — and I mean generous in a "or really, Keanu Reeves is a great actor" sort of way. Now I've been listening to people go on and on about how Sonic's camera.

After all,

Now I've been listening to people go on and on about not compar-les aren't ideal at all times, but even the worst view in Sonic pales in comparson to how horrific BS' cameras were. You'd think it would have made sense that in a real-time 3D world, there would always be a handy over the shoulder' cam - but not in Blue Stinger, no sir! They've gotta go the ultra-cinematic route, no matter how unplayable it renders the game.

unpayated it renows the game. In injury does not pay the might have done the programmers and/or designers a lot of good if they'd simply studied something called movies and figured out that certain angles just don't work.— MIY and Marvel. Comics are not the place to go shopping for all your camera angle needs. Alb, but when Activision amounced plans to port it to the Sattes, thankfully they thought twice about leaving the game untouched and foisting it on unwary domestic buyers. The camera system has undergone a com

of unwary contests buyers. The camera system has undergone a com-plete revision, and thankfully you can opt out of the 'cameras' that CG imple-mented in the import release. Primarily, an over-the-shoulder cam has been added so that now most fits of rage can be avoided (I need my meds). While it isn't perfect, it certainly marks a huge step forward for the game itself. That about wraps it for this super-quick preview. I'll dive into more depth next month when the final copy blows into the office. Till then, know that if you see this game before then, you can mark it as 'must-rent,' with an option to buy. **ECM** 





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ECM: I CAN SEE... AS DEVELOPER - CLIMAX GRAPHICS 1 PLAYER IV IV IF FOR THE FIRST TIME! PUBLISHER - ACTIVISION

AVAILABLE SEPT. 9TH

## PREPARE.





The action is fierce. The world is Might and Magic."

Coming soon to your PC.



















months back, I reviewed Street Fighter Alpha 3 for the PlayStation. and I thought it couldn't get any better than this. Well, it took only three months and Sega's little white box to prove me wrong: The Dreamcast version of Alpha 3 is here, and I think we're going to have to spawn a new GF term: "better than arcade perfect." - We've seen console games that have more features than their arcade counterparts in the Tekkens and Mortal Kombats, but now it's becoming a regular (if somewhat disturbing) trend for DC titles to be better at home than in the arcade

(Namco's Soul Calibur only arcade perfect but gameplay features than the arcade.

How exactly do you top an arcade game of SFA3 Simple: gameplay

Battle. If you missed the PlayStation review of this game, World Tour is a new addition to the SF universe which lets you tour the world like Ryu. duffel bag in hand, constantly seeking a new challenge and living for the fight. Visiting foreign countries, you'll drop in on ol' buddies like Blanka (or should I say Jimmy?) in Brazil, Fei Long in Hong Kong, and... what the heck, see how Sagat's doin' in Thailand (still got those chest pains, big guy?). As you fight, you'll gain experience, as well as character power-ups which you can customize before battle. These power-ups give you the ability to super cancel, chain combo, fill your





## A blazing 2D Capcom fighter at home with no loading or RAM cart required!



super bar without doing anything, and more. The RPG elements plus the ability to use your customized character in Versus mode make World Tour Mode worth playir But what really gets my juices flowin' in DC A3 is the Dramatic Battle. We first saw this mode in Street Fighter Alpha on the PlayStation, in which you and a buddy played as Ryu and Ken against a CPU-controlled M. Bison. Sandwiching the head of Shadowloo between a flurry of low shorts, spin kicks, and fireballs was exciting, fun, and novel (after 10+ renditions of Street Fighter, innovative ideas are a welcome change). Even the PlayStation version of Alpha 3 had Dramatic Battle, but you were restricted to mirror matches, so two of the three characters yould be the same (e.g., Ryu and Charlie vs. Ryu)



GAMERAN COM











Well, the Dreamcast version is the next step in the evolution of Dramatic Battle. With no restrictions on backgrounds, character selection, or strenuous loading time, the DC A3 lets you and two other friends go at it simultaneously. A ménage à trois Street Fighterstyle! Imagine it - you're so cocky that you challenge two buds to take you on at the same time. It's tough defeating two human opponents with separate life bars, but if you do, you'll be the undisputed SF champion and can tell the tale till the day you die. For those who haven't played Dramatic Battle, you must try it. It'll probably be the best time you've ever had playing a Street Fighter, and trust me, being there since day 1 of SFII, I've played a lot of Street Fighter. Seeing the DC version of Alpha 3's Dramatic Battle and watching the DC manage four characters onscreen simultaneously with Marvel vs. Capcom, the next logical step is a Street Fighter game which lets four players go at it, all at once, for the full duration of the round without tagging in and out. Throw in modern compatibility and I'll be in Street Fighter heaven... Capcom, are you listening?!

2D lovers, Street Fighter Alpha 3 is yet another chance for the DC to flex its 2D muscle. Porting every

sweet frame of animation perfectly, without any slowdown or loss of frames, the DC version of Alpha 3 is arcade perfect... ahh, I like the way that term rolls off the tongue. Best of all, there's no loading time (one of the few gripes I had with the PlayStation version) to worry about, so it truly is perfect. With notches in its belt like Marvel vs. Capcom and Street Fighter Alpha 3, the only thing Capcom has left to prove is whether Sega's dream machine can duplicate the CPS III wonder Street Fighter III: Third Strike. Judging from the impressive efforts thus far, I won't be surprised if the DC can bring the SFIII experience home

As yet, there's no word from Capcom whether they will make any changes to the U.S. version. But as it stands, they need only change a few names and translate the trash-

talking text between rounds. they'll have one of the best Dreamcast titles this year. E









is Konami's other Dreamcast title. While the other is a mythic adventure through the realms of the undead. this title is a fly-by-the-seat-ofyour-pants combat flight simulation; Airforce Delta will attempt to take you on the highway to the danger zone (how could I not put in a Kenny Loggins lyric?). Closer to Afterburner than a tra-

ditional flight sim, AD will try and cater to the larger audience which would normally be turned off by the overly technical and dry flight sim. As we all know, from our television car commercials, "wider is better" and that is exactly the audience Konami hopes to snag with this game. Thank heavens, because can think of nothing more mind-numbingly tedious than having to sit through another hard-core sim.



First impressions? Well, for one, the backgrounds are stunning. If there has ever been a more beautiful sunset in a game, I haven't seen it. The perfect backdrop to a high-speed dogfight -"Isn't it lovely how the sun's rays reflect off that exploding fuselage, honey?" The frame-rate is, of course, hovering around 60 fps, and the level of detail on the enemy aircraft and







naval vessels is something to behold (that is, before you demolish) them with a couple of stinger missiles).

The control seems pretty good, although it's obvious that actually finding targets will be a bit of a process. There is a lot of space up there and only a few planes to shoot at. Some of the dogfights seem more like a game of peekaboo than anything else.

The levels are all sortie-based, with the standard control room briefing and schematic run-down before you hit the skies. Money, earned from kills, allows you to purchase a wider variety of planes. You have your own hangar, so before each mission you can cruise in and choose which plane will be best suited for the task at hand. Be careful while flying, though, because crashing a plane means it is forever gone, and that is some expensive equipment, gentlemen...

Airforce Delta may end up being the Dreamcast's version of Ace Combat. While it may be questionable whether the power of the machine is being full utilized or not, it's a pretty safe bet this game will find a core audience. EN









EL NIÑO: OFF WE GO, INTO DEVELOPER - KONAMI 1 PLAYER THE WILD BLUE YONDER ... PUBLISHER - KONAMI AVAILABLE FALL GAMEFAN.COM

Webe in Japan it's ok to release a game that promotes rogue highway racing, but here in the States, where kids are infinitely dumber they guys, wanna lay down on the median strip like in *The Program*?, the fewer ideas you put in their heads, the better. The idea of little Timmy, with his driver's permit, hauling down the asphalt in Backwoods, U.S.A, high-beaming drivers is, well... just to hilarious!

The premise of the game is simple: Cruise the highways of Tokyo, searching for other hot-rod-ders to challenge to races. When you see one of your road rivals, flash your high beams and prepare to drag! There's money at stake, so you'd

better bring your A-game.

Playing Dreamcast games still aves me. The graphics are so overwhelming that you almost graphics are so overwhelming that you almost. It altakes good gamelya to sell games, and Extrame Rear seems to have all the right pates some beautiful graphics, they isn't that the Syd Gemor unning. The three bornto, concept, and extra features make it an excellent game. At first you will take sisse with the control. The

cars tend to float and the analog control seems sluggish. My initial thoughts were frustration and the desire to write this



off as a sub-par game. However, both ECM and Fury told me to stick with it. They too had issues early on, but quickly flip-flopped. No need to even cite it as a preview problem because, after a few races, you'll have grown accustomed to the control and be kickin' butt. Like other titles of its lik, Extrame Racer allows you to lungrade your cars as well as purphase you to lungrade your cars as well as purphase

Like other titles of its III, Extrame Receraliows you to upgrade your cars as well as purchase more formidable racing machines. The money you earn beating other drivers will quickly fill your coffers, so Ifs wise to soup up that mean machine of yours as much as possible. All of the cars are licensed and the streets you'll be tearing up are actual Tokyo reeways.

tearing up are actual 10xyo freeways.

The ability to customize the color of your car, license plate, and driver name are also velicome additions. The sensonal touch is always nice...

The music is still not in, but that was fine by me, personality of the personal touch is always nice...

The music is still not in, but that was fine by me, personality in perfect to need to my youn turn for a contract of the personality in the personality in the personality in the personal personality in the personality in the personality in the personality in the personal personality in the personality in

Another Dreamcast game that appears to be a winner. This will be a mighty good Christmas for The Niño.













DEVELOPER - GENKI 1-2 PLAYERS
PUBLISHER - CRAVE AVAILABLE SEPT. 9TH

EL NIÑO: THAT GUY'S FLASHING HIS HIGH
BEAMS AT US... THINK HE'S A GANGSTER?

hate PC-to-console ports — any hard-core console gamer worth his salt should feel the same way. Oh, on rare occasions we get something worth playing the recent port of Quake 2, for instance), but in the main we're more likely to be the lucky recipient of the latest fare playing at the local shovelware theater. Gamers like DC Incoming and Expendable, which left development on the PC side of the universe and were obviously manhandled over to console during Ted the ignitor's spare time. Generally it doesn't matter as much in the Land of the Rising Sun, as you're about as likely to find someone playing PC games there as we are to find someone playing a 'dating sim' (earth to social life...come in, in social life. However, if a console game is being developed along-side its PC counterpart, you can bet that it has a better than 50% chance of being something stunning, as the console side tends to

sole side tends to infect the pace and style of development rather than vice versa. Case in point: Acclaim/Criterion Studios incredible DC launch title, Trickstyle (a.k.a. Velocity). Up until E3, I was just a bit leary of what Criterion was putting

by on... 22, if was jost a list leavy on what chieffold Was pluting together after taking their initial Dramicast title, Redline Racer, for a spin (published in Japan by the PC+0-DC port king, Imagineer). The properties of the p

While Trickstyle looked more like a racing game in the early stages of development, it seems as if the game nigrated a little bit more in the direction of something like Cool Boarders, where tricks and racing share equal time (probably the rationals for the name change). Cruising around the tracks at swift velocities, Trickstyle simply feels fun. Control is tight, and pulling off the various maneuvers is cer-

iainty enjoyable. Only problem at this point, though, is that it seems amazingly difficult to chain tricks together, which is what made games like Cool Boarders. Here's to hoping it's rectified in the final retuding gravity in general would probably help matters immensely).

As is the case with 90% of the DC games out there (Seventh Cross and Sengoku Turb keeping that percentage down with a few other offenders), Trickstyle is absolutely stunning visually. A solid frame-rate that hovers from 30 to 60 FPS (which is amazingly annoying as they only give by





















ECM: ABSOLUTELY
PREVIEW STUNNING VISUALLY
PUBLISHER - ACCLAIM AVAILABLE SEPT. 9TH
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my uncle would take me fishing at a nearby lake. Ah yes, those were the days... when my uncle taught me many important lessons in life, including: the ability to open a bottle with my teeth, how to blow snot bubbles out of both nostrils, the ability to burp on command, and the best pickup lines of the time. He also taught me how to prepare the bait, cast a rod, and gut a fish. Which is why today, I blow snot bubbles when I sleep, have bad teeth, and find myself spending Friday nights alone with Samurai Shodown 2. But those happy summer days of casting my line, baiting fish, and catching anything (except mosquito bites) still

remember the summer days when

DC can handle Sega arcade ports with no difficulty.

Gameplay is dependent on whether you're playing with the normal DC pad, or the Ascii fishing reel. With the Ascii rod, the game rocks. Every motion, from casting your line to a specific location, to sinking the hook into the fish simulates real rod fishing. The vibration is an added bonus, and while it can't replace the pulling feedback you get from the arcade version, it's very well done. When playing with the regular DC pad, it's a bit of a pain because the shoulder buttons (R Shift namely) are what you use to reel in the line. Pressing the button halfway will reel it in slowly, while pressing it all the way will quickly draw your line





## All that's missing are the brewskies and mosquitoes...

remain in my head. And it was these feelings which Bass Fishing on the Dreamcast reminded me of

Now I know what you're thinking... why the hell would we play a fishing game on the Dreamcast? I mean, we want games like Sonic Adventure, Virtua Fighter 3tb. Soul Calibur, and Shen Mue, right? Well, first off, Bass Fighing is based on Sega's arcade fishing game, Get Bass Fishing; and we know how good those Sega arcade-to-home ports are, right? The graphics, from the fog to the biggest bass, are identical to the arcade. The effect of water splashing as a fish fights furiously for its life is very cool. There's very little graphic distortion, aside from some slowdown here and there. So if you're worried that the game is flawed graphically, you can sleep better at night knowing that the in. It takes practice and getting used to, but playing the added Consumer mode, which offers even more lures than the arcade, will give you all the time you need.

Bass Fishing is a great game, but it isn't without its problems. While the load times aren't particularly long, their frequency is pretty high. Bass Fishing isn't a fishing simulation, where you must take into account factors like wind, weather, boat noise level, and gauge of your fishing line. On the other hand, it's a good fishing game that strips away all the tedious details, and leaves you with just the thrills and excitement of fishing.

Dangohead once blew a snot bubble which drifted away and was found 5 days later by a small boy in a fishing village in Okinawa.

VIEWPOINT • OB DEVELOPER - SEGA 1-2 PLAYERS DANGOHEAD: WHO SCORE • OB PUBLISHER - SEGA AVAILABLE 9/9/99 FISHING IS BORING? DANGOHEAD: WHO SAYS

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# 

COMING SOON COMING SOON COMING SOON COMING SOON COMING SOON COMING SOON









U<sub>j</sub> man and a second s

CART: Flag to Flag (Sega) — A throwback to the days of Virtua Racing, Cart: Flag to Flag features sweet visuals, a multitude of car sickness inducing tracks, and simulation type racing. Now, where's my Daytona 2?











Soul Fighter (Piggyback Entertainment) — A throwback to the days of Golden Axe, Soul Fighter features some very slick special effects, magic attacks, and cool looking enemies. Let's hope they make it multi-player.











Armada (Sega) — A throwback to the days of Star Control (see a pattern developing here?), take control of a fleet of starships as you prevent an alien armada of vessels from invading the galaxy.











Castlevania: Resurrection (Konami) — With awesome background design and excellent special effects, Castlevania: Resurrection is shaping up to be one of the most visually spectacular DC games.











Evolution (Tommo) — How can you not love an RPG when your main character's name is Mag Launcher? Cool character designs and a zany story will make Evolution one RPG you will not forget.

# 

COMING SOON COMING SOON COMING SOON COMING SOON COMING SOON COMING SOON











Furballs (Bizarre Creations) - Cutesy, furry creatures are not to be reckoned with when they're armed to the teeth with blasters, rocket launcher, and other items o' big hurt. One of the more bizarre titles on the DC.











the Dreamcast, explore the immense magical world of Climax Landers. Traditional RPG gameplay mixed with splendorific visuals, and you've got a winner.











Shen Mue (Sega) - Perhaps the MOST anticipated title on the Dreamcast, the first chapter of Shen Mue is set to come out October (of a possible 15 chapters!). Check out next issue for a full blow out!











Crazy Taxi (Sega) — Ah, the life of a taxicab driver. Picking up passengers, cordially greeting them as they get in your cab, and then driving like a madman in the wrong lane to get to their destination. Sounds like a good game idea, huh?











Undercover (Sega) — Another Resident Evil-like game, Undercover puts you in the role of a female "Mulder-like" police officer investi gating a murder, only to fall into something bigger.

# Japan Now!



n conjunction with Square of Japan Squaresoft held a press conference in Tokyo, Japan for Vagrant Story. Various editors from major U.S. gaming publications were invited to attend this surprise event. After getting a rush-job on a passport, I was off to another land. The plane ride from our office to Narita took just under 12 hours. My trip didn't begin well, as I left over \$500 in CDs on the plane - not a happy camper. A larger portion of the editors arrived at the Miyako Hotel on the afternoon of July 13th. After checking into the hotel, we headed out for dinner and some Kirin.

The real fun would come the next day at Square's headquarters. Tomoyuki Takechi, CEO ot

Square, began the conference by expressing interest in Nintendo's forthcoming Dolphin console. Although he spoke very briefly about the Dolphin, it was definitely a sign of things to come, We can only speculate, but is it possible that Nintendo and Square will have a future again? Mr. Takechi also clued us in on

the status and expectations for Final Fantasy VIII. Worldwide, Final Fantasy VII has sold 7 million units to date. Square would like FFVIII to surpass that number by one million units. Square believes it can reach this goal too. In the company's eyes, not many other publishers are capable of creating stories as involving or game design as well thought out as its own line-up, particularly in the RPG realm.

Mr. Yasumi Matsuno (developer of Final Fantasy Tactics) and Michio Okamiya (Publicity Producer) spoke about their latest project, Vagrant Story. It's an adventure game that combines some of the most popular elements of Resident Evil, Parasite Eve, and Metal

Gear Solid. Expect a 5-10 hour adventure the first time through, but up to 40 hours of gameplay if you find everything. Borrowing its battle system from Parasite Eve, Vagrant Story ups the ante with precision attacks. Now when you attack an opponent, you can choose which part of his body you'd like to attack first. If he has a strong weapon in his right hand, you might want to take out the use of his right arm. If he's a

quick enemy, taking out his legs would be good. Sometimes dead enemies will yield weapons or armor. Weapons and armor are very important in the world of Vagrant Story since there are no item or

The story takes place in a different universe than that of Final Fantasy. The hero, Ashley Riot, is a member of the

The SQUARE FF VIII development team field questions from various reporters as loving Chocobos watch in sheer admiration. <Nandesu te?! Chocobo ga?>

AGRAN STORY IN



Takashi Tokita - right (producer of Chocobo Racing) and Akitoshi Kawadu - left (producer of Saga Frontier 2), pose for the mighty GF cameral

VKPs (Valendia Knights of the People) and must bring justice to the kingdom of Valendia by stopping a group of terrorists, led by Sydney. Anyone who liked the art in Final Fantasy Tactics will be stunned by the look of Vagrant Story. Characters converse in text bubbles not unlike comics. There's no spoken dialogue, but that means that a localized U.S. version won't have awful voice acting. In place of rendered cinematics, the

story is advanced using real-time graphics like Metal Gear Solid.

After our time with Mr. Matsuno and Mr. Okamiya was up, we had an hour to question the Final Fantasy VIII design team. Even cooler for me was the chance to speak with and question both Takashi Tokita (producer of Chocobo Racing) and Akitoshi Kawadu (producer of Saga Frontier and Saga Frontier 2). We learned much about the yellow bird and the rigors of making Saga Frontier 2 in an hour's time. An interesting fact about Chocobo Racing is that Mr. Tokita chose 2D pre-rendered sprites in lieu of polygons to maximize the amount of racers. From Mr. Okamiya we learned that the hand-drawn backgrounds of Saga Frontier 2 took a crew of 25 people more than a year to complete

When the interviews were done, our group was treated to a 25 cent tour of Square's offices in Japan. However, our time with the kind folks from Square vasn't over. After learning more about the company and its games than I ever thought possible, we headed back to the Miyako hotel.

The editors freshened up and met in the lobby

YVERD

around 7pm for a hight to remember



Members of the press along with Square had a traditional Japanese dinner; there was sake and tofu all around. We spent two hours at the restaurant, mostly downing cold sake. Not everyone made it out of the restaurant - how shall I put it - sober? One member of the press was primarily to blame, but it was a lot of fun. After leaving the restaurant, those of us who could still stand headed over to an Irish pub in Roppongi. From there we made it to Game World, a small arcade located smack dab in the center of a mass of bars and clubs. As if

> Lexington Queen - a bar known for its clientele, nothing but models from agencies around the world. We danced and drank the night away at this club. Our group dwindled as the morning drew nearer. Only two of us were left around 5am. One editor from an east coast weekly publication could barely remember the night. Another editor apparently had "problems." All in all the people at Square know how to make games and throw a press bash. Special thanks to Lisa and J.I. Cerberus

that wasn't enough, the next stop was

#### This Week, On Shovelware Theater...

One of the problems that comes along with Sega's intense focus on making the Dreamcast 'developer-friendly' (read 'crutch for less-astute coders') is that they may have done their job too



second DC outing, Expendable. Which now leads





us to the ultimate question: Is it show elware or an enhanced, ultra-hard-core console port? I'll give you three guesses and, well, you know how it goes...



If I had to characterize (stereotype?) Expendable, I'd liken it to some of the women I've been known to date: incredible-looking, with not a lot going on

upstairs, and who also happen to have sisters who're that much more attractive (but still in desperate need of a new bulb). Translation: While the DC rev of Expendable is certainly one of the most gorgeous games yet, the gameplay is incredibly repetitive with very little in the way of variation (there isn't even a bloody 'jump' button!); worse yet, the









## EXPENDAB

version actually looks better, with full bump-mapping and support of higher-res modes (one look at the water effect in the PC version and you'll wet yourself). While I didn't expect the game to actually perform at a higher-res (not much point on a TV), I fully expected that it would a) run at a higher frame rate, and b) at the very least, support all the effects of the PC rev including some DC-only additions. Thankfully (?!), the gameplay is just as lackluster and repetitive on the PC, with the same shoot, shoot, shoot with no variation and no reason to play the game other than to experience the eye candy. Simply put, games like One and Apocalypse on PS crush Expendable (sad but true, Sega-faithful).

#### Grab a Shovel...

After this year's E3, I was in love with Expendable. Now that I've dug a little deeper, I'm sorry to say that this isn't the game it should have been (you keep hoping your children will grow up right, <sigh>). I'm going to say this once and then not mention it again (until it invariably

happens with the next poor man's PC-to-DC Games like





repetitive gameplay) have no place on Sega's newest hardware. The only thing they do is make people look at the DC as 'old' technology and simply increase the cries from throngs of PS zealots making noises that the PSY is the console to wait for not that I blame them after playing through the aforementioned games. Here's to hoping beyond hope that these games never

see the light of day in the U.S. and Europe, and if they do, that they're radically enhanced. Somehow, I have the sickening feeling that we're getting them - like it or not.

> ECM is, um, well, what can I say... err, he's, well... Hmmmm... My folks taught me if you haven't anything nice to say, then - uh, whoops, too late.





SAY, 'NO!' TO SHOVELWARE! PUBLISHER - IMAGINEER WWW.GAMEFAN.COM

ECM: REMEMBER KIDS, JUST DEVELOPER - RAGE SOFTWARE 1-2 PLAYERS

AVAILABLE NOW JAPAN

VIEWPOINT:63



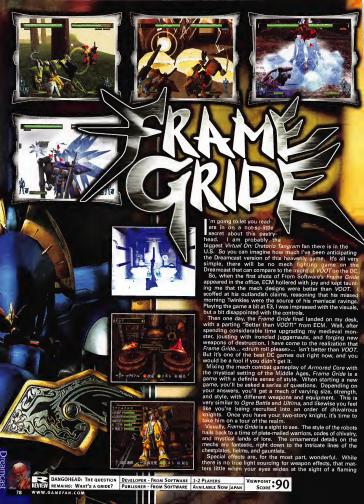
game, doesn't it? But I have good reason to not like Bugyy Hoat. First of all, it really tries to be Power Drift. Hoved Power Drift, even the half-seed PC Engle rendition. So how does Bugyy Hoat attempt to miline a game older than even the Sega Genesis? Okay, left see, cure bug-left, and the seed of the properties of the properties of the seed. The bug and character marquees at the top left of the screen. Is that enough for you? You'd think a game that copies a classic acrade hit would be a solid title. Alas, it's not. My lack of enjoyment from Buggy Heat stems mostly from its bad physics engine. Part of realing, whether on-road or off, is how a vehicle handles and reacts to its surroundings. Saying that the vehicles of the properties of th

sort in Buggy Heat, your vehicle will come to a halt without any flips or other sort of fanfare—it just stops, and that's wrong. Colliding with other racers is just as uneventful. Slaloming through sand dunes doesn't feel right either. I understand that off-road racing is different from its asphalt-based berthern, but this is ridiculous. Many a time I found my buggy slding around uncontrollably in a spin that shouldn't have happened at my current velocity. Maybe the developers should have spent less time creating nice graphics and more time on physics, features, and overall gamepley.

The Dreamcast is a relatively new system. Programmers still have some time before they become accustomed to the architecture. Some developers already have the hang of things. There are too many games out on the shelf right now for you to fork out your hard earned cash for Buggy Heat. Wait for a real off-road reaer or pick up Extreme Racer.

Cerberus loves taking his Power Wheels out for a weekend romp through Woodland Hills and that little hill in his backyard.







these crystals to make 'squires.' While these squires aren't the traditional 'Carry my lance. Boy, and tend to my horse' types, when summoned in battle, her war good for support in attacking the enemy or setting up energy shields. In fact, it wasn't the combat I was looking florward to every time. I fired this game up, it was forging new weapons, upgrading equipment, building new squires, and mangling your robot. I couldn't get enough of the "mech ranching" elements in this game, and I wish there were more "secre"; times to forge.

more "secret" items to forge.
In the sound department, I like most of the music from the game, though there are a number of monotonous tracks that will make you that that muse button faster than Eggo can hit on a married woman.
While Frame Gride is an awasome title, it's not without its faults.

As mentioned above, the game has issues with control and camera. While you are piloting a two ton piece of machinery that would be sluggish in the real world, overall control takes some time getting used to. The biggest fault this game has is not implementing some kind of "lock on" button that would keep the camera locked-on the enemy mech. If Frame Gride had the lock-on feature from Zelda-OOT, the gameplay would be much more enjoyable. Lastly, load times are very long. This is the first Dreamcast game in which I got up, went to the tridge, made a nice turkey sandwich with dijon mustard, came back, and it wasn't done loading yet.

Despite the control issues and loading, if you're a Dreamcast owner, don't miss out on this adventure in a world filled with magic, gothic style, and big, bad, broadsword-wielding behemoths.

When not protecting arcades from the dangers of scrubs, Dangohead enjoys griding to the tunes of Charlie Brown (much to the chagrin of his GF colleagues).















Transcript of the first design meeting for King of Fighters at SNK headquarters:

Producer: Okay guys, the people upstairs said we need another game to milk to death. Any ideas? Lead Designer: Hey, I have a great idea! Let's have some really cool innovative gameplay features! We can also make a sequel each year that has nothing

new to offer. Producer: Well, that sounds like a good idea, but won't it be difficult to improve on our own innovation? Assistant Designer: You see, that's the beauty of this. We implement some never-before-seen elements like tag team battles, rolling, projectile evasion and such. Lead Designer: Players are dumb and won't even notice that we're actually using the same exact game with only new characters and backgrounds. Producer: We'll make a killing! We'll save a ton of money on development costs. Do it, do it now! And finish it in two weeks.

Okay, so maybe the first design meeting didn't go exactly like that, but you wouldn't be able to tell from the way each KOF game has turned out. King of Fighters for the Dreamcast didn't make the trip home in perfect form. SNK played with the backgrounds... and they look beautiful. Characters remain fluidly ani-

# DREAM MATC

mated sprites, but the locales are rendered in 3D. However, good looks don't make up for the game's shortcomings. Namely, the lack of any real gameplay innovations. Fans of the series argue that SNK has modified the franchise and created more balanced gameplay. If that's the case, I can't see it. Recycled fighters and special attacks don't warrant the creation of a new game. I know Capcom is just as guilty of milking its titles, but Capcom isn't as obvious about it. Compare Street Fighter Alpha to its subsequent sequels and you will see a difference — from Custom Combos to the "-ism" selection. As for King of Fighters, even five years later I don't notice much of a difference between KOF '94 and KOF '99.

In the right hands, KOF can also be very cheap. In some circles it's referred to as King of Block Damage because of its pattern-based gameplay. KOF isn't all bad, it can be very fun to play. It's easy to pick up and mess around with. Control is responsive, speed is about right, there's a solid combo system, but it's just the same game. Adding insult to injury, Street Fighter Alpha 3 is available for the Dreamcast. For me there is no decision to make, SFA 3 is a much more enjoyable game. KOF has a large fan base, and if you're one of those fans, you won't be disappointed. Not a fan? Grab some Alpha 3...



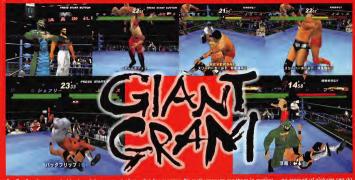




CERBERUS: MAI HASN'T

DEVELOPER - SNK 1-2 PLAYERS LOST HER, ERM, CHARM. PUBLISHER - SNK AVAILABLE NOW JAPAN

VIEWPOINT . Score •



Mreading as a hobby haan't been a part of my diet for many years now. When I asy wrestling, I men IWMF and a bit of Hogan, Andre the Giant, and Randy "Mach Mant" Savage WWF. I'm talking Hulk Hogan, Andre the Giant, and Randy "Mach Mant" Savage WWF. Grubbing to come out of the power plant within the last 5-10 years. Japanese wrestling is something i've neither bothered to get into nor been interested in, though wrestling has just as large a following in the Land of the Rising Sun as baseball or even Sumo.

Not including some older games in the vrestling gente, most have really been lackuter. American Technos had some good ones like WWF Superstars and who can forget Nintendo's Pro Wrestling for the NSS1 Although, there have been way too many bad wrestling games for me not to be a skeptic. When Gant Gam appeared on my desk! wasn't very enthused. Only the thought of Jeffrey, Wolf, and Kage as playable wrestlers made booting up the Dreamcast a little easier. Still, it's a good thing I was forced to Jay Glant Game, notherwise! Vouldn't have given this game a decent chance. Not that Glant Game instantly had my interest, it took a while for the game to grow on me. My libital reaction to the game wasn't a good one, but little by little it became a whole lot of thin.

Its really seary to see them in motion — no amount of pictures and othern justice. Characters that don't wear mask shaw facial expressions that vary depending upon the situation. Skin and other textures are very sharp and don't but up. The visuals will hold your attention long enough for you to figure out the controls. Once you've got the control down, everything changes. It's so much fru to reverse a hold and get your opponent in a headlack. Sure, like other wrestling games it can be a mash fest at times, but it comes with the territory. If it'll make you feel any better, the battle of buttons is very rare.

Leant believe "I'm actually recommending a wrestling game. At the

can't believe i'm actually recommending a wrestling game. Ath vry least give Giant Gram a chance — if it means anything, i'm not arwestling fan and liked it. As far as wrestling games go, this is as good as it gets — beautiful graphics, stellar sounds, a lay-by-play announcer, custom characters, speedy controls; and a winked four player mode. Only a guest appearance by El Niño could make this one better.

Cerberus has, of late, taken to visiting local gyms and weight rooms wearing various pastel colored pairs of tights and saying over and over, "Whatchoo gonna do?"









ile all the Square heads out there are talking about Chrono Cross, Legend of Mana, and Vagrant Story, Dew Prism is just as much a contender as the rest of them, but it won't get as much press. This is the sort of game that can easily slip through the cracks, like a wreck in the wake of Square's media blitzkrieg of titles. But while I perused the wonders of Square's preview disc 5 (packaged with the import Legend of Mana), Dew Prism was the title I had the most fun

with right off the bat. First thing I noticed was that the environment and characters are incredibly solid for a 32-bit title. The characters are very large, well-animated, and gouraud-shaded for that squeaky clean look. This is such a gorgeous game that it shows developers are still unlocking the PlayStation's potential, five years after its debut (shades of Donkey Kong Country?). Environments are polygonal, yet they have a distinct 2D feel... Are

my eyes deceiving me or is that arallax I see?







I wouldn't call the backgrounds "2D with depth" (a term coined with Bomberman Hero), but they're not fully 3D because you can't rotate the camera. Call it 2.75 D, if you will... being more akin to 30 than 2.50. Enough with the techno-babble, the game has two main characters, whom you choose to control at the beginning of the game like Chris or Jilli In Resident Evil. Also, depending on your selection, the other character will interact with you as the story progresses

What's interesting is the characters (Lew and Mint) have completely different play mechanics. Mint is a magic user who derives magic points from bashing monsters over the head with her Dual rlings O' Death. And

once she has the MPs, she can cast spells to complement her ring attacks. Lew, on the other hand, is more of a 'monster

rancher.' For every baddie he cuts down with his sword (generic mas culine weapon of choice for all action adventurers), a coin is left, behind, which lets him transform into the monster he just dispatched (a play mechanic we've seen recently in Jade Cocoon). However, Lew's monster transformations also give him the ability to sneak about, open new doors, solve puzzles, and even escape falling death (by turning into a

winged dragon).

Thankfully, Square EA has announced they are bringing this game to the States, so you can all add it to your list of titles to look forward to next year. Dew can all add it by our its of these to look forward to next year. Sew Prism will be out in Japan this October, but we won't see a U.S. version till the next millenium (don't worry, it's only next year). But this just shows there are games to look forward to after Vagrant Story and Chrono Cross.

EGGO: DO DEVELOPER - SQUARESOFT 1 PLAYER PUBLISHER - SQUARE EA WINT THE DEW.

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AVAILABLE 2000







# ベイグラント ストーリー

he lone title on Preview No. 5 which wasn't playable was Vagrant Story. Seen only in movie form, it still gave us a good look at what to expect come final time. Many people are calling this Square's take on Metal Gear Solid because it's a short (5-10 hours first time through) action adventure which has that grainy, grey-textured look just like Konami's hit

n's own executive editor Cerberus was flown to Japan for an international press conference where Square announced Vagrant Story for Japanese and U.S. release. For the full wrap-up and low-down on this game, read his write-up in Japan Now of this issue.

Getting back to the demo disc, Vagrant Story's movie is done up in true cinematic fashion, complete with green preview screen ("this preview is intended for all audiences"). Featuring a very moody Middle Ages castle setting, this game's atmosphere is awesome. The storyline follows the adventure of one Ashley Riot, a server agent and member of a group called Riskbreaker. You're in the mansion of Duke Bordova, and his people are searching for you, thinking you murdered the good Duke. The rest of the movie shows you sneaking about the castle, confronting a bad guy, and lastly coming face to face with

a large dragon.

The movie ends like a true Hollywood movie trailer with one last dramatic scene, designed to leave you wanting more. The Japanese version of this game will be out later this year, while the U.S. game is set for early 2000. Stay tuned because you certainly haven't heard the last of this one.













PUBLISHER - SQUARE EA



our of the five games packaged with the import Seiken Densetsu: Legend of Mana are coming Stateside. Front Mission 3, however, is the lone title destined to be stranded in the Land of the Rising Sun, alongside other Square titles which never made it here like Tobal 2, Soukaigi, and Racing Lagoon (some things are best left forgotten). For those not up on their FM, it's basically a strategy RPG with the ever-popular mech theme. Controlling teams of giant robots, you wage a turnbased war with the enemy.

No announcement of a U.S. version has come yet, and considering we haven't seen any of the Front Mission

games thus far, we probably never will. So if you're dying to play the latest installment in this series, you only need wait till September 9th, when the game comes out in Japan. Then it's up to you to cross those pricey import waters, because I ser ously doubt FM is coming to you.



AVAILABLE: VS - 2000: FM3 - YEAH, RIGHT.

EGGO: METAL GEAR...

SOUARE STYLE. WWW.GAMEFAN.COM





here's three types of imports: the good, the Asuka. and the ugly. Some Japanese games, like Tobal 2. deserve to be brought over here - while some, Tech Romancer, should have never gotten past customs. Asuka is an import which I pray never sees light of day here because it's just plain bad. When I say bad, it's not Deadly Arts bad (when peo-

le arque that video games cause violence, they have a point, but they cite all the wrong games. Spending 40 hard-earned dollars on Criticom

or Deadly Arts is enough to make you want to kill somebody). Thankfully, Asuka is above that level of awfulness... nor is it as bad as War Gods or BioFreaks. Though it will never rise above CD-coaster status, Asuka is better than the ugly Midway twins... barely.

Asuka is, in no way shape or form, worth a purchase. Don't even consider it, or I'll turn you into the gamers' union, and we'll revoke your hard-core license. Cerberus makes the point that this game makes you laugh, and admittedly I had a good time slapping him down while discovering the snapped play mechanics of Asuka. But just because a game makes you smile doesn't mean it's worthy spending money on. After all, I had fun smashing the producer of War Gods at his own game with my overpowering Punch-Punch-Rock combo with Tak. But playing a broken game gets boring fast, and that's what Asuka is - a "broken" fighting game whose gameplay is as shallow as a guest on the Jerry Springer show.

The play mechanics are so snapped that I envision the game's development as this: Marketing Guy #1: OK, we need a gimmick...

Marketing Guy #2: I know! Japanese school girls in uniforms!

Marketing Guy #1: Already been done, so we'd better dress 'em in different sports out-

fits - baseball, tennis, gymnastics... That way, every hormone-charged Japanese youth can either find a character to identify with or fantasize over.

Marketing Guy #2: We gotta make it simple, since we're shootin' for mass appeal here. Every character's moves will be executed with a fireball, uppercut, or down-down motion. Throw in a bunch of flashy moves, lights, and an anger

meter... for a button-mashing climax. Marketing Guy #1: Yeah, yeah! What about playtesting? Marketing Guy #2: Screw that! We've got schoolgirls!

<toasting wine glasses>

Trust me on this, stay far, far away from this game. Even if you see the chick-laden cover in the import rental store, don't be tempted. Don't let that sick curiosity get the better of you. Asuka is a game you can do without.

Eggo hasn't found a "chick fighting game" yet that's worth buying.



WERE... BORN... BAD!

PUBLISHER - FAMILY SOFT AVAILABLE NOW JAPAN

Score: 62



# METALGEAR S O L ID

When Metal Gear Solid was released in the U.S. last year, it was the cream of the crop for PlayStation titles. In fact, it was too good; the U.S. version of Metal Gear Solid was even better than the Japanese. So lin a show of one-

Metal Gear Soli'd was even better than the Japanese. Solin a show of oneups manship, Konami has released MGSI in Japan — which is the American game with a few extras. But no matter which way you spin it, ganges like FF International, Tenchu Shinobi Gaisen, and Metal Gear Solid Integral are just cash runs. With almost no development time, a company can add a few features to entice

With almost no development time, a company can add a few features to entice the would-be buyer, slap a fancy "bigger, better" sticker on the box, and voilal. A new Metal Gear for the unsuspecting public! But don't be fooled by the shiny, red sticker. MGSI is still the same game which you played and beat last year.

Here's the "new stuff" that Konami's added to MGSI. The American voice acting, difficulty level select, and extras (like Tuxedo Snake) are in, as well as Pocket Station support. These features mean nothing to us, but they sweeten the deal for Japanese gamers.

An axtra third disc has been added, which fields 300 VR missions. This is the sperkling sem which gleams, oh so prettily, when you pick up the box and consider buying it. However, don't be fooled by the santalizing mysteries of this hird disc; the unfortunate truth is that most of the extra VR missions are boring. The new Weapon Mode missions train you in the use of weapons you hould already be proficient in since I'm assuming everyone's finished the origination.

inal Metal Gear Solid already.

There are some emjoyable VR missions tucked away in that stack of 300. Especially notworthy is the Mystery Mode, in which you play Detective Snake. Begin the mission and there's a dead quard on the ground, lying in a pool of blood, search the nearly surroundings for a clue to his murder, then pick out the suspect from a lineup of three guards. In one example, you'll find a broken camera on the ground, with its mounted harness right above the victim. Check the three susground, with its mounted harness right above the victim. Check the three susfered in the control of the control of the harness above the victim. After a little deduction reason flow that one of them has a bump on his head. After a little deduction reason flow that the control of the con

Konami's planning on bringing this game over here. And when they do, sometime later this year, I can only recommend buying it for the people who never played the original Metal Gear Solid. It's still a great game, nearly flaw-less in every aspect and novel in game design, if MGS is now to you, this game would score a 100. But only the super hard-ore MGS fans should check this one out, and even they should rent it first.







## Don't be fooled by this snake in the grass...







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#### GA<u>mefan Sports gamefan Sports gamefan Sports gam</u>efan Spor

# Gameran Sports

still think soccer sucks, but I must admit that watching the finals of women's World Cup was pretty cool. There is something about women's sports which is refreshing. Like in tennis, where I much prefer to watch the ladies (and no, it has nothing to do with Martina or Anna's sweet, sweet candy), women's soccer can be so much more exciting than men's games. The matches seem to be played with so much more intensity and, without all of the huge contracts, mass exposure and court dates which dominate the male sports scene, you get to watch a more pure athletic competition. Not to mention the novelty of chicks bangin' around on a field has yet to lose its appeal (I won't even start on the pleasure I gain from watching women's boxing...). As cool as women's sports are, though, I would never buy a video game based on one.

This month I was supposed to cover

some super bike and motocross games. I didn't, sorry. Quite frankly I'm not all that jazzed about any of them and most are still too early to bother with. Next month I will have some more recent playables, so maybe then I will put them in. The Man only gives me

six pages a month, though,

This game will undoubtedly sell a bundle of copies, as did its predecessor. None-the-less it is clear that Xtrame has run its course and it is time for 989 to walk away while it can. Not only is it

X/rame has run its course and it is time for 989 to walk away while it can. Not only is it an infinior product to 6/kz, but this whole gen is going stale...fest . Get your kicks with this version and then move on.

G. C. P. M. O. QO

Carnelot knows what makes a great game. They sturned Physiciation audiences with Hot Shotsand now they have delivered to the NSA. This may be that best Mintendo game of the year, definitely the most addictive. All Nitrando own swill usen to own this tible. Now If loould

NFL Xtrom. 2
PlayStation
989 Studies

Golf on the N64 with Nintendo characters... while the game could've sold bazillions on that concept, the big 'N' got Camelot, the wizards behind *Hot Shots Golf*, to develop the game. The result? Definitely one of the best golf games ever and certain a must buy for all N64 fans.

so I have to be stringy. And I would hope all of you would agree that NBA Shord/out or NH. 2000 overage is a faul more important.

Notice the two FOX titles in this month's sports. Watch these guys because they are serious and their new games are good. Forget the dismal games of FOX past (college hoops and I/O could scare the stripes of at gier) these guys have some good product and their own sports networks to market them on. 989 and EA should be very wary. — If NBAE.

## NE Overterback Club 2000

264

Developer: Iguana Publisher: Acdaim Available: Naw # of Players: 1-4

wan though there is plenty of elbow room on the N84 for the system's only in the N84 for the system's only is no less intense than the war that rages on, on the PlayStation. Acclaim, which made the right decision to get out of the PlayStatio football scene, where they were getting pummeled, has dug in deep on the N84. With Iguana, one of the industry's most talented teams, working on it, OB Club has

become a viable football franchise. Viable or not, QB Club '95 still couldn't beat out Madden 99 for the best football game on the system last year. Without a doubt it was a better looking game, but the fact remains it didn't play as well as EAS opus. Iguana is hard at work again, tweaking the title so that it will not only look amazing, but have the kind

of gameplay that will engross football fans.
Added will be a heightened Al system,
pinpoint Passing (their version of Icon passing), and chocolatey goodness. O.K.,
othere is no chocolatey goodness, but there
are new player models and over 1200 new
motion captures.

While Iguana gets no points for originality, they at least get props for putting in a feature that allows you to create your own players and custom build your own teams. This will be very good for those of you who want to construct dream teams to go want to construct dream teams to go head-to-head with your buddies. My team will feature Genghis Khan as a running back— 'cause he has that eye of the tiger— and Zeus as QB— 'cause he has good instincts and can really see the field. Ben

Franklin will coach...
Look in next month's GameFan Sports

section for a full review. EN











steam...





#### Developer: 989 Studios Publisher: 989 Studios

Available: Fall # of Players: 1-8



kinetic play of the arcade sports title is addictive, to say the least. While the lineage dates further back, it wasn't until NBA Jam came on the scene that this genre turned into the major money-maker. Since then there have been dozens of buttonpounding titles, from NBA Showtime and NHL Open Ice, to the more recent Blitz 2000 and Xtreme 2.

NFL Xtreme, 989's answer to the much ballyhooed NFL Blitz, managed

to capture a good portion of the latter's audience with last year's inaugural title, but will be hard pressed to match the success this year. The fact of the matter is that this genre has begun to

run out of steam, and the first franchises to take it on the chin will be the wanna-bes, like Xtreme.

While there is much to be impressed with in Xtreme 2, there is also much to be disappointed in. This game looks great and blazes, thanks to a beefy engine. The poly counts on the players are high, the motion capture is good and the frame rate and speed are excellent. Even the control is responsive, which is of paramount importance given the speed of the action. Unfortunately, none of this makes up for the fact that it has little in the way of gameplay.

The shallow gameplay can be attributed to the fact that Xtreme 2 is a matchup of 5-on-5. With this few players on the field (two less, per team, than Blitz), the level of difficulty and strategy are greatly reduced. It really doesn't matter what play you pick, the offensive-mindedness of the game and the lack of players make just about every throw a good throw and every run a good run; some reciever will be open; a hole will present itself to the running back.

All of the visceral "...this genre extras that are showcased in Xtreme are fun has begun to to watch. You can run out of throw players, put them in sleeper holds, and give them atomic drops.

Always good for a laugh, at first, these additions lose their novelty quite quickly - much like fighting in hockey sims. None of them have any bearing on play, so what is the point? The oomph will eventually lose its... well, oomph.

NFL Xtreme 2 will entertain some of the younger players who don't mind the repetitiveness of the play. But, otherwise, this isn't worth the purchase. Blitz, too, is running out of steam, but its deeper, more enjoyable, gameplay should give it legs enough to make it through one or two more seasons. Xtreme should hang up the cleats before it is too late...









GAMEFAN SPORTS GAMEFAN SPORTS GAMEFAN SPORTS GAMEFAN SPOR



#### Developer: Camelot Publisher: Nintendo

# of Players: 1-4



Graphically, this

edition.

game is a step-up

from the previous

If there's one thing the hard-core gamer hates, it's sports games. Oh sure, maybe one or two of you are big fans of Worldwide or ISS soccer (which may explain why there are so many on console), but for the most part, we'd sooner play 'Dress Up With Barbie' than lay down some coin for John

lously addicting in the Tetris sense. Nobody exactly knows why something as simple as allowing a bunch of geometric shapes to fall into a well is so intoxicating, but MG64 is the only sports game in recent memory to have the same 'forsake your friends, job, girlfriend (yeah right, who are we fooling?)'-style addiction.

Available: Now

Super Madden Turbo Deluxe '99 (at least Barbie looks good, right Right?!). guys? But something wonderful happened a mere two

#### It's a cold day in Hell...

weeks ago - Camelot Software Planning's Mario Golf 64 arrived, and I've had a mild epiphany and a slight adjustment in my never-give-a-sportsgame-a-chance stance. See, this game is Camelot's prior PS mega-hit, Hot Shots Golf, only this time it's staffed by

Mario and his motley crew. There isn't much that needs to be said about MG64. It's golf. However, there's just something about it that screams to be played over and over and over again. At first I figured it was the grim determination to simply unlock all the hidden characters in the game scratch that, I'm still going. Then I figured it must be the insane multi-player matches that would break out in the office on a moment's notice... nope, wrong again since I still play it alone. I

guess it's simply that the game is fabu-

Instead of rendered sprite golfers pasted on fully 3D backgrounds. Camelot took an extra step and built the bunch out of polys so that everything has a nice seamless look, with none of the pain typically involved with 2D objects slapped onto 3D backgrounds. Overall the game appears to have taken a minor hit in the resolution dept., but any complaints can be mailed to 'I Don't Care' c/o this magazine.

So all you non-sports gamers (just about everybody reading this) can run out to your nearest software retailer and indulge in a nice few weeks on the links without the annoving sunburn and golf ball urchins trying to sell you your balls after you've hit them into the rough. Now if only Camelot would include a 3D golf cart sequence in their next rev... something along the lines of Road Rash would be nice. ECM















#### MEFAN SPORTS GAMEFAN SPORTS GAMEFAN SPORTS GAMEFAN SPOR

Badger. for three!





#### Developer: Midway Publisher: Midway



Please make the

rubber-banding

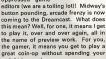




ne of the great productivity killers of the GameFan offices is the NBA Showtime arcade machine. Not that I'd know anything about that, anymore, now that ECM has decried that if I'm seen playing the machine, the hard drive goes bye-bye. See what happens when you give people with Angry Dwarf Syndrome a little

power: right to their head Napoleon-style. It is a classic case of The Man keeping

the peeps down. Win one for the oppressed game



weight in quarters. ECM insists that it is an exact port of the arcade title and that it is not necessary for me to play on, but I think I need to play a few more times- just to make sure; as the sports editor it is my sworn duty to be thorough. Alas, ECM was correct. NBA Showtime is, in fact, a marvelous facsimile of the arcade hit. The graphics are identical; the commentary is identical;

# of Players: 1-4 and my custom character, Badger, still



rains down threes on Fury (the resident chump), in identical fashion. Ooh la la... For those of you unfamiliar (shame on you!) with Showtime, it is nothing more than an NBA Jam for the 21st century. Crazy dunks, player "fire" and the ability to knock guys flat, Arch Rivals style, are

all in here. Like the arcade version, you can create your own custom player and build him through the season (tournament). Win three games, earn 2 more points to allocate to



his stats. It's all about the old man... Four player action remains the game's strongest area. While it is enjoyable to go head-to-head or against the computer, 4-player allows for the most harrowing action and gives the game a much higher replay value - not to mention smack-talking quotient. There is nothing funnier than whooping another team and then taunting them for being SAG. I will make Fury cry...

It may be a preview, but it is clear that little will change. While developers have yet to put the final spit-polish on, it is clear that this game is every bit as enjoyable as the arcade version. NBA Showtime is button mashing mayhem at its best. EN









SPORTS GAMEFAN SPORTS GAMEFAN SPORTS GAMEFAN SPOR



#### Developer: Radical Available: September Publisher: FOX Sports Int. # of Players: 1-8

"NHL hockey

with a little

FOX attitude..."



hile I can say that the sports genre is generally glutted, there is always room for another hockev sim; ALWAYS. I have remained faithful to NHL for years, but my eyes still tend to wander. It may be a good cracker, that NHL series, but it's still just the

same, old cracker. FOX Sports, which stumbled on the scene last year with some less-than-stellar Gremlin titles (they sucked, o.k.; there

I said it) and then faded into the background. Unusual for a division of such a gigantic corporation; especially

when the corporation's primary focus is sports.

Retooling has been done and now FOX has some beefy titles, one of which is NHL Championship 2000 (tentative title). Developed by Radical, the company responsible for the stellar NHL Powerplay, Championship is quite impressive. While only a few of the original Powerplay guys are left on the development team (the other members went on to form Black Box, who are developing the Dreamcast hockey title), the assembled talent exhibits the skill and knowledge to spin gold.

Don't expect to find any breakthrough features or revolutionary takes for this hockey sim. Everything that is featured in Championship shows up, in one form or another, in every other hockey game. The modes of play are the same; the user

stats, coaching options and individual player moves are in here; there are 18 international squads added as well as commentary. Nothing up these sleeves.

What NHL Championship does have, though, is some fantastic gameplay, great graphics and that unmistakable FOX flavor. The FOX announcers, John Davidson and Kenny Albert, do the playby-play and color, respectively. All of the graphic lay-overs and sound effects

(used in game presentation) are those you see on the FOX broadcasts. Thankfully, the puck shooting robots have been omitted... the puck glow and tail, however,

have not. Cherry does not approve. As mentioned previously, the gameplay is exceptional. The engine Championship is using is a good one. The control is tight, the graphics are sweet and the Al accurately depicts each team's style of play. What has yet to be fixed is the game's sluggish speed. Even on All-Star, it isn't running nearly as fast as NHL or FaceOff; this could become a huge problem, if not fixed. Without the sense of speed, you don't have a hockey game.

Radical and FOX have a potential hit with NHL Championship 2000. If they fix the speed and remember to cater to the hockey enthusiast, they will be alright. Otherwise, I'll be sticking with the same old cracker. EN













# MEFAN SPORTS GAMEFAN SPORTS GAMEFAN SPORTS GAMEFAN SPORTS





#### Developer: Radical Publisher: FOX Sports Int. # of Players: 1-4

FOX attitude..."







teaming of FOX and Radical looks to be a good one. NBA Basketball 2000 (tentative title), the second solid sports title from the duo this fall, should have the meddle to put a stain on both ShootOut and Live's hold

on the hoop sim market. While FOX Sports will succeed, in major part, as a result of their ability to market (owning all your

own networks has perks), the hopes of creating a viable franchise will rest solely on this first game's

quality. Forgotten is the debacle that was the N64 college hoops title. This is the here and now and now, NBA Basketball 2000 looks good.

Better than good, actually; not only are the graphics and control good, but the addition of the FOX look and some innovative new wrinkles make this a solid contender. As with their hockey title, you won't see anything new, in the way of features or modes. All of the NBA teams, as well as the All-Stars and rookie All-Stars are present; player faces are included; and most of the moves are motioned captured, from fade-aways and alley-oops to tomahawk dunks and behind the back passes. FOX "attitude" is supplied by Doc Rivers and Greg Papa, and many of the FOX Sports trademark features. like the ticker and the FOX-Scope Replay, are included. It should bring a pretty good facsimile of the real thing to your PlayStation.

Some of the innovations I speak of make for much more interesting (and less annoying) gameplay. For starters, balls will come off the rim with an X on the ground, where they will land. This makes for much easier rebounding - something sorely missing from other titles. Also included is a new double-tap free throw shot meter. This new system works much like a golf swing meter and makes for some challenging "NBA basketball...

trips to the stripe The game still has some problems to be worked out, like a

laggy replay feature. some broken commentary and some Al glitches. Radical assures us that they will all be fixed, though, so we can breathe easy. NBA Basketball 2000 should rate as more than a dark horse, except for the fact that it is the new kid on the block. Maybe they could get Jim Brown to plug it on America's Funniest... EN











# CONTRACTOR OF THE PROPERTY OF

# TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT

ameo isn't known for going with the flow. Some of Namco's most successful games have redefined the way we play games today. Pole Position, Galaga, Ridge Racer, Tekken — all solid examples of Namco's ingenuity. Tekken has been one of my favorites (I have a lot of these don't I?) since the first time I played it. Tekken 2 was an even better game with more characters, better graphics, and larger combos. I loved T2 in arcades and was so amped about the PlayStation conversion that I picked it up on the first day of its Japanese release. Tekken 3 improved gameplay tenfold with "smart" side-stepping and a load of new fighters. Namco's not ready to give us Tekken 4, but we do have Tekken Tag Tournament to tide us over.













I guess if Capcom can borrow the tag team idea from SNK, Namco can do the same. Takken Tag Tournament takes characters from Tekken, Takken Z, and Tekken 3 and adds more moves, game balance, and the new Tag feature. Located to the right of the Right Punch or Right Kick button is the Tag button. Like the Capcom versus series, switching out gives one character a rest as the other enters the fray. The coolest thing about the switch has to be the option to Tag out and simultaneously launch your opponent. For instance, Jin's Tooth Fairy attack is performed by side-stepping then pressing Right Punch; pressing the Tag button immediately after connecting with the Tooth Fairy will cause Jin to dash out and his team member to rush in. Jin's cohort then has more than enough time to commence a juggle combo — nice touch, wouldn't you seth?



















Tagging isn't only for showboat combos; it serves the same purpose as it does in Capcom's Vs. series. A fighter that is on the sidelines is resting. When at rest, a fighter regains his or her stamina. I've illustrated one of the three primary ways a fighter can join the battle. The other two ways are by performing a Tag team throw (Left Punch, Right Punch, and Tag) or by simply pressing the Tag button. The latter method can be risky, as a fighter entering the ring is susceptible to attack. Odd how just another button can change gameplay so significantly. Each existing fighter has learned a half-dozen or so new moves, from Heihachi's new Dark

Thrust to Yoshimitsu's Shrine. These same fighters have been modified for the sake of better gameplay. Yoshimitsu's mid-kick isn't as cheap as it once was, for example. Damage levels have been toned down on some moves and characters, but problems abound with returning fighters like Ganryu. Initially, 20 fighters will be playable; they include Baek Doo















any new characters you can bet we'll be seeing a lot of old ones. A complete cast means that you can combine characters depending on their relationships. know some players will complain that besides some visual enhancements, the game

looks almost the same. Scenery has been redone and looks great; each character gets new garb, but it's not a significant step in the optical department. I'm not complaining, as this isn't a true sequel. How many times have other publishers done up a sequel with the same graphical libraries? Rest assured that Tekken 4 will be a large jump, but accept Tekken Tag Tournament for what it is, a very fun-to-play upgrade.

Already jammin', the tuneage is completely different than before. In-game audio tracks are Network partition, the fundage as a spinning CD. I think I'll be getting the Tag Tournament soundtrack ASAP. For 50 cents a pop you really can't go wrong trying Takken Tournament. It's not a summer in arcades without a new Namoo figiner, and this is it. Practice up because Namco plans to have some kick ass tournaments.



















hat defines a console? It certainly into the hardware. No, it's probably something more akin to the games (at least thought it used to be, but all this PS2 nonsense... «sight»). A closer soles were defined by yealth most considerably something the consoles were defined by yealth and the consoles were defined by yealth and the consoles were defined by years to be in the 16-bit days; the PS in the 32-bit age (only because the Saturn died of unfortunate complications). If you were going to characterize the Genesis existence, it would more than likely focus the consolers—in the consolers—in the sole of shooters. However, this month we'll be focusing firmly on the former, with a title that many of yeu have probably forgotten (heck, it even slipped my mind!). Konami's platforning tour-de-

force, Rocket Knight Adventures.

When Sid parties began fiseing the ironfisted rule of Nintendo in the first half of the 18-bit age, they brought with them both their hottest refuges (in Konam's case, the Ninja Turties, Cestlevanie, and Contra... ah, the good of down as well as stunning upthe Geneals' "Blast Processing" produce the Geneals' "Blast Processing" power house. Rocket Knight Adventures, starring Sparkster the possum, was one such amazingly crafted original creation.

Realizing that Sonic, and Sonic alone, was nearly responsible for the Genesis' mete-oric, Nintendo-smashing rise to power, Konami figured, "Hey, we can do this too," and a legend was born; a legend that, needless to say, was lost after only one sequel aplece on Genesis and SNES (a sequel that failed to do the original lustice, Imight add).

Sparkster was a sword-wielding, rocketboosting rodent (actually, I suppose he was a marsupial) that probably could have been a distant cousin to Sonic. Traversing a multitude of horizontally and

vartically scrolling levels replete with oppower-ups first for heath, crystals for points), parallax, and plenty of prodigious play, this game has aged amazingly well in the six years since its debut, in fact, it ast up a considerable amount of my time this month as a very vicious deadline crept ever nearer... so close, in fact, that this issue will barely make our everimportant print date (loops...)

While gamers had been subjected to a veritable flood of platforming titles (as noted in the *Blue Stinger* preview, far be it for this industry, yada, yada, yada...), Sparkster actually stood apart from his anthropomor-



















phic cousins. This was mainly due in part to the fact that Sparkster's 'gimmick' (the rocket pack strapped to his back) hadn't been run into the ground - can't say the same for cute, wise-alecky critters that raced through games faster than a speeding hedgehog (who else remembers Socket?).

The story line in RKA pits the virtuous hero Sparkster of the possum people, against the nefarious porcine menace

determined to wipe all pouched-kind from the face of the earth. Sparkster's mission is to (try not to wince) save the possum princess and turn all the pork bellies he meets into so much bacon. This is all accomplished through some amazingly solid play mechanics.

Instead of the standard hop on their head till they're dead' mechanic, Sparkster employs handy little pig-sticker that ires hoops of energy apable of stopping any pugnacious opponent dead in his tracks. More importantly though, is Sparkster's take on Sonic's spin-dash attack: by charging up his handy-dandy rocket pack and letting loose, Sparkster can cut a swath of death across the

screen leaving all pig-kind dead in his tracks. Well, not entirely 'dead.' See, the developers of RKA made a conscious effort to make this game as non-violent as possible.

Instead of turning your portly foes into slabs of pork ribs with each 'kill,' they'd simply lose their clothes and run wailing off the screen like a bunch of little girls that lost their dollies. It's amusing to watch, and kinda makes ya wonder why it is that every time a reasonably cute character bites it, they go out in some sort of fruity, flowery, Shidoshi-like way (check out Tarzan, and its butterfly death-cloud for the



furthest realization of this notion). Perhaps the nicest aspect of RKA was the simple fact that it proved Konami could make it

without the talented chaps over at Treasure (members of which created games like Axelay and Contra 3 on SNES, among others). Large bosses (some featuring a decent amount of multi-joined animation — something which would later be used quite extensively in Contra Hard Corps and Castlevania:

Bloodlines



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able amount of my

time this month...

Graphically, RKA was a solid platform game back in the day, with stunning animation and a very nice color palette that Konami worked from with deft skill (the sickeningly limited color palette being the largest design flaw in the Genesis). As was the order of the day, there was layer upon layer of beautiful parallax, something that has gone the way of the arcade game in recent years. i.e. it's still around but you really have to look hard to find

any good examples. Amazingly, the music is actu-

ally good enough to get the blood pumping, even in this day of "CD quality sound." In fact, I'm probably of the opinion that musicians had to be better back then, simply because they didn't have the crutch of megabytes of uncompressed music to work with (though there still are some examples of stunning, PCM music — Final Fantasy Tactics

or Astal, anyone?). As it stands, RKA may be one of the more forgotten Genesis

platformers (I'm not sure why, though) but it's certainly one of

the best. Too bad the magic didn't carry over to the Genesis and SNES sequel, Sparkster (units spired at best). Maybe if we're really lucky, Konami may find it in their hearts to grant us another chapter, helmed by the original team. Of course, we'd have to be talkin' full 3D, cause: "Nobody likes 2D anymore" — anonymous game developer at a major publisher... who shall remain nameless for his own protection.













# AnimeFar

Anime, Manga, Asian Live-Action, J-pop, Culture, and all related produc

It's been rather strange times for me lately. About a week and a half ago, we had to put Baby, a cat that I've had for fifteen years, to sleep. Doing that really had an effect on me - it was the right thing to do in that situation. I have no doubt of that at all, but it's still a hard thing to come to terms with. Since then, I've spent a lot of time thinking about things, evaluating my life, who I am, which parts of my life really matter to me and which honestly don't. Sometimes, in the lives that we lead, we never really take the time to get a go look at exactly where we are at and what is go on around you - it's takes an event such as t before you realize how quickly things are going without your really noticing them all. I know sound like a complete freak here who is trying be "deep" or something, but I guess I'm just s ing that everyone should take a moment or two look at their lives and appreciate the importa things that are meaningful to you. - shidoshi

### Goods Showcase

#### **Pokemon Products**

Like 'em or loath 'em, those cute little creatures from the Pokemon world have taken the US by storm, and there seems to be no end in sight. Knowing how hot their property is, Viz is set to release a number of new Pokemon products this September for eager fans to snatch up. As always, AnimeFan is here to give you the run-down on what is what and what you can look forward to in the world of Pokemania.

#### Pokemon Tales >

The first new line of Pokemon products are the "Pokemon Tales," pocket-sized books which each feature a different Pokemon creature. Printed on durable board paper stock, these books are perfect for all of the younger Pokemon fans out there, but will also be a treat for older fanatics as well. Each story is accompanied by beautiful illustrations, done in a unique style by a different artist for each book. Will you read about Pikachu and his exciting adventures, Charmander's telling his friends about the ghosts he saw, Squirtle trying to find the courage to come out of his shell, or Bulbasaur helping two children to solve their argument. For the mere price of \$4.95, these little collectable books will be a great

addition to anv Pokemon fan's collection.



#### > Pokemon Origami

Vou've caught Pokemon, not see if you can make them! With the Pokemon Origami book, any Pokemon master can now become an origami master as they craft and create their favorite Pokemon. This full-color book contains all of your favorite Pokemon

Pikachu, Bulbasaur, Squirtle, Eevee, and many more - all crafted in pre-printed paper. Fold and

CHARMANDER SEES A GHOST PEKACHUPS DAY





manipulate each page until you've got an entire Pokemon c lection that you've crafted with your own hands! This 80 pa book will retail for a suggested price of \$8.95, and is a great way for anyone to have fun and learn a new craft with the ca of Pakeman.

#### < Let's Find Pokemon!

Forget Where's Waldo... where is Pikachu? In this 22-pag book, you'll get a look into the daily life of Pokemon, fro Pallet Town to the mysterious Mt. Moon - detailed artwo shows hundreds of Pokemon at work, play, and other acti ties. Each location gives readers a new challenge, and t additional activity pages provide even more fun and enjo ment.

Is that not enough for you? Well, don't forget about t GameBoy Color Pokemon Pinbell and Nintendo 64 Pokem Snap games from Nintendo, the Pokemon movie coming o

this November in US theaters, the Pokemon VHS and DVD collections from Pioneer and Viz, the Pokemon manga - including an all-new "Pokemon Adventures" series from Viz, all of the Pokemon toys and stuffed dolls out there (I want me one of them big Pikachus), those greedy little virtual Pikachu thingies, the Pokemon card game from Wizards of the Coast, the Pokemon / Lunchables cross promotion, the Pokemon toys from Hasbro ... just to name a few. - shidoshi





" Ready lke? Kick the beby... " " Don't kick the beby... "

#### Silent Mobius

246 pages · US Format · Graphic Novel

In the heart of the 21st century, strange demon-like creatures referred to as "Entities" started to plaque the Earth. As normal police forces were unable to handle them, a new group called the "A.M.P." was formed with the specific task of taking on these Entities. Comprised of six women, each has a special talent - ranging from

enhanced psychic abilities to superhuman rength - that helps them in doing the job that no one else can. Hard essed (which, I guess I am), I might best describe Silent Mobius as sort of Ghostbusters set in the world of Blade Runner. The A.M.P. ust hunt down the Entities that slip into the human world, and conin them in spirit shields until they can be dealt with properly.

volume three of the graphic novel release, we open ith a tale surrounding Lebia Maverick, the cyberneti-Illy powered Visionaire. Lebia is on the trail of an eluve criminal whose goal is to completely take over the ntire computer system for Tokyo. Next we go outside e A.M.P. to watch as police officer Robert DeVice puts s life on the line trying to stop the flow of Dommel, a range drug that turns anyone who takes it into horrible onsters. Finally, the chief of the A.M.P., Rally heyenne, must deal with the monsters in her past hich center around her younger sister, and the reason at she helped form the A.M.P. in the first place. What errible secrets lead to the arrival of the Entities, and the rming of the A.M.P., and what will the other members ink when they find out the truth?

Silent Mobius is an engrossing manga title, if not a bit heavy at times: unless you're ready to give it your full attention, it may come off as a bit boring. As well, even though I've gone through three graphic novel volumes, the cast stills seems a bit one-dimensional to me. I would most recommend Silent Mobius to those out there who like the deep, rich sci-fi manga titles (especially those of you who love Shirow works such as Appleseed) - if that's your kind of thing, you'll really dig this saga. If your idea of a good read is something like Ranma 1/2 or Oh My Goddessi, however, this one may be too much overload for you. - shidoshi



01995 Kie Asemiye / Kadokewa Shoten Publishing

# Makoto is an average

#### Call Me Princess: Issue 2 Shoujo • CPM Manga • 7+ 32 pages • US Format • Monthly

schoolairl who wants only one thing out of life - she wants to find a wonderful man who will treat her like a princess. Ever since her sister found such a man and had a wedding like those out of a fantasy story, Makoto has held the

esire for the same deep in her heart. But her dayreams for finding such a guy may stay just that, as Il of the boys around her at school are nothing nore than classless jerks. That is until one day when, while stuck up a tree, a handsome boy who eminds her of her brother-in-law helps her down. Vill this new boy be the man of her dreams, or will strange turn of events come between Makoto and er desires?

can't say I'm too familiar with Tomoko Taniguchi's ther work, but I liked the first issue of Call Me rincess, and I look forward to both future issues nd anything else of hers that CPM Manga decides o give us. While her artwork and scenes won't vorry the big names of the shoujo manga world nything soon, her art is stylish and has a certain harm to it. CMP is VERY shoulo - it's a heartvarming story about relationships and the dreams of young girls. Because of this, a lot of male fans who might pick up a copy will wonder with bemusement what the point is. But for the female readers out there especially younger ones - who are sick of manga with nothing but guns, robots, and exposed girls, or for those of us who actually have the ability to appreciate and understand shoujo, you should hunt yourself down a copy to see what you think.

I don't care if I get ribbed for liking a "girlie" comic or not, I enjoyed Call Me Princess and think should fans should at least give it a shot. The story and characters aren't anything groundbreaking, but then again it is still early in the story and who knows how the story will progress. As well, it's cause for celebration anytime a new title comes out in this genre of manga that is still sparse in the US. I'm glad to see more American companies giving should manga a try, and I prey that it's a trend that will only grow as time goes on.

@1993 Tomoko Teniguehi

- shidoshi

AnimeFan rates each title reviews on a scale of A (excellent), B (good), C (average), D (poor), and F (horrible). Remember, a grade of C isn't bad, and only when a title starts getting into the D range should you start to consider avoiding it at all costs. For DVD titles. two scores are present, one for the anime itself, and the other for it's DVD presentation. The DVD grade covers everything from image quality to package to extras, so while a DVD may look beautiful, it could loose points for having no extras or other such issues.

#### **Guide to Ratings** Codes

We'll use this example: Sub I Dub VHS I LD I DVD

Black: The title is available in that format / language. So, for our example, the title is out in both Sub and Dub on VHS.

Underlined: The version being reviewed. So, we're reviewing the VHS Sub version.

Greved: Not available. So, our title isn't out on LD.

Red: Coming soon / planned. Our example title is planned for release on DVD.

Send comments, letters, artwork to:

AnimeFan 6301 DeSoto Avenue Unit #E Woodland Hills, CA 91367

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WHATE

WHY IS HE

SHIN NIGOTI



#### Anime Drive In

#### What's playing in anime this month

#### **Bubblegum Crisis 2040** AF Best of the Issue!

Action • TV (3 eps) • ADV Films • 12+

90 min · Sub | Dub · VHS | LD | DVD

There eternal cause for great arguments among anime fans the remake. The idea of taking a hit anime title and remaking it is like throwing raw meat into a pit of rabid dogs when it comes to the fans. Will the fans accept the new interpretation of the title, or will they cry for blood over the bastardization of their beloved series? If any such classic anime could cause an uproar over the mention of a remake, it's most certainly Bubblegum Crisis. Enter Bubblegum Crisis 2040 the retelling of the saga of the Knight Sabers, updated and redesigned for a whole new generation of fans. As worried as I was going into BGC 2040, I've got to say that most of my fears washed away as I watched. I was a bit sad to see that the "music" aspects of the show weren't a strong here as they were in the original BGC. In the first three episodes, outside of the opening and closing themes, the only time we hear Priss sing is when she is rehearsing with her band, Sekiria. That's a shame, as music was a big part of the original, and the credit songs showed a nice bit of promise. The other aspect that didn't feel "right" was Leon - instead of the cool, sly type of guy he used to be, he's now a somewhat more boring "roughneck" type. The rest of the cast also went through quite an update process, but for them, things worked out far better. Hove Priss' new design, Nene retains the cute and silly feel without looking TOO cutesy. Sylia looks elegant and refined as she should. and while I do miss the old Linna a bit, her new design really grew on me. Boosting the new designs are the English voice actors, who all do a wonderful job voicing the Knight Sabers - this is one of those dubs where I thought every voice fit the character perfectly. And, while it's not fair. to directly compare the original BGC and BGC 2040 in the terms of art quality. I think the hardsuits look FABULOUS in this style, especially Linna's (hers was always my favorite). If you go into Bubbleaum Crisis 2040 trying to compare it to the original series, you'll only be looking for disappointment. However, if you accept it's a remake and go into it without expectation, you might really be surprised by what you find. I know there will be people who will curse the creation of this remake until the day that they die, and that's fine, but I was extremely impressed by what I saw. Not only did it blow away all expectations that I had for it, but it's made me fall in love with the story of the Knight Sabers all over again. - shidoshi









Can it be? Has Miaka really found the seventh warrior of the Sh Seven? Now that it seems as if she has. there are two goals left to

complete: let Tamahome know that it's time to return to Konan, and somehow get the "Book of the Four Gods" back from

Nakago, part of the Seiryu Seven. But planning to do so and actually accomplishing it are two different things, and it seems that Yui isn't ready to give Tamahome up so easily. Will the lifelong friendship between her and Miaka really come to an end so easily? If there's one testament to my liking of this series, it is this: I watched almost four hours of Fushigi Yugi straight (I was a bit behind on my watching), and when I finished the last episode that I had, I still wanted to watch more. To me, that's a good sign. Back when I first started into FY, I had a questionable opinion of it - it started off a bit odd, and there were some

#### Fushigi Yugi: Dark Reunion

Drama • TV (3 eps.) • Pioneer • 13+ 75 min • Sub I Dub • VHS I LD I DVD

serious issues with badly drawn scenes.

But as the series progressed, some of the minor hiccups seem to have been worked out, and while it's still TV-quality animation, it's much better than what it was at the start. The story, as well, got very good very quickly, and now is a wonderful mixture of complex plots and enjoyable characters (who are thankfully given enough character development to matter). As I said, even after watching nine episodes in a row, I can't wait to get the next volume and see what happens next. Fushigi Yugi has the emotion and character that many similar series are missing, and if it weren't lacking in the production

ment (as even the best TV shows usually do). I would be hard-pressed to have any complaints. - shidoshi

value depart-





#### Saber Marionette J Again

Action/Comedy • TV (2 eps) • Anime Village • 13+ 54 min • Sub I Dub • VHS I LD I DVD

Saber Marionette J was a show I never was looking forward to see - a show based around a collection of girls who screamed "created to attract the guy fans." However, I was actually quite surprised and pleased with what I found. Enter Saber Marionette J Again, the second run of the SMJ TV series. Continuing the story, we now find Otaru in possession of three new girls - the Saber Dolls, Tiger, Luchs, and Panther. Slightly reformed, the three marionettes were sent to Otaru by their master, Faust, to learn how to be more "human." But



unbeknownst to them, a seventh marionette is about to appear on the scene - Marine, a strange and mysterious marionette (and a real cutie). Something was bothering me about this show, and after a while, I realized what it was the show has turned into Tenchi. The feel, the mix of seriousness and comedy, the guy who seems to be collecting a household of strange women who all have feelings for him - it's all there. The switch from wacky comedy to slightly more serious character comedy, while not all bad, is sort of a shame. The bigger shame, though, is the wide use of scenes that were aided by computer effects. The effects range from the simple, such as computer created backgrounds or multi-level zooms, to fully computerized things such as the "bouncing house" (something you have to see to understand). Not only that, but the entire series has that sort of computer look, with lines that are jagged

due to digitization instead of looking nice and smooth. I can understand computers help reduce the cost and amount of work, but I am still not cool with the idea, nor the look the series has because of it. The show is still worth checking out if you're a fan of Saber Marionette J, I just wish they would have left things alone and kept them how they were before. - shidoshi

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Everyone's favorite hyper hedgehog returns in an animated spectacular that will blow its American counterparts right off the tube. Sonic races deep into the heart of Robotropolis to save the planet and comes face to face with an evil Hyper-Metal robot version of himself.

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#### Record of Lodoss War

Chronicles of the Heroic Knight

90 min · Sub I Dub · VHS I LD I DVD

Adventure • TV (3 Eps) • US Mangs • 13+

It's been five years since the War of the Heroes, and all seems to be fairly stable and peaceful in the land of Lodoss. However, in the shadows of the night, a familiar evil is about to make itself known again in a big way. Ashram, the Black Knight of Marmo, has returned, and is seeking out the legendary Scepter of Domination. Should he get his hands on it, all of Lodoss could be doomed. The free

knight Parn and the elven warrior Deedlit, heroes of the previous war, are forced to once again take up arms to defend their homeland from certain doom. Anyone familiar with anime TV titles knows that they don't have huge budgets, so the artwork and animation isn't always as good as it could be. Now, in itself, Record of Lodoss War: Chronicles of the Heroic Knight isn't

bad or anything, and only had a scene or two that looked rough. The problem is the intro; it's just SO awesome, so beautifully drawn and animated that the actual show can't even begin to compare. If they had had the production budget to make the entire show like the intro.. man oh man. That dream aside, CotHK seems to be off to a pretty decent start. The new characters, though slightly wacky in the character design sense, look like they'll gel well with the story, and he music continues in the tradition of "exquisite Lodoss music." The English voices did little to win me over (Parn's voice especially bugged me), so unless you will only watch dubs, I would highly recommend the sub. I think it's still too early to say if this series will be considered a classic or not - for now, everything seems good, and I'm eager to see how it develops over time. However, I never was hardcore into the original series, so Lodoss fans may go for this quicker than I might. Darn nice sleeve design, by the way. - shidoshi







#### **Fake**

Bishounen • OAV • AnimeWorks • 16+ 60 min · Sub | Dub · VHS | LD | DVD

Wanting a little rest and relaxation, detective Dee Laytner invites his partner, Randy McLane (whenever I hear his name mentioned, all I can think is Die Hard) to go on vacation with him to a guiet resort in England. Expecting a quiet, enjoyable time, soon after getting there the two detectives are shocked to find a body floating in the nearby lake. From there on out, their vacation becomes a twisted web of murder, deceit, and maybe even a little romance. My opinion of Fake was quite different between the first half and the second half of the show. At first, the story sort of just drags along, and it seems as if it can't decide if it wants to be a murder mystery or a character drama. Then, come about the midway point, the storyline picks back up and things start getting really interesting. One thing that didn't grow on me, however, were the character designs - everyone in the story is drawn a bit too angular and "chiseled" for my tastes. The English dub, as well, is slightly off - for the most part, it's not too bad. but at times it can really get on your nerves. Now, for a little warning: this show has quite a bit of homosexual overtones to it. While it certainly isn't what I

would consider a hentai title, if vou're not comfortable with non-heterosexucharacters then this title certainly isn't for you. If anime is

to become a gen-

uine form of entertainment here in the US, all types and genres of anime need to come our way. Fake fills a category that is still lacking in English, so it's nice to see AnimeWorks give it a shot - shidoshi



#### Fist of the North Star: Vol 4

Action • TV (3 eps) • Manga Ent. • 16+ 75 min • Sub I Dub • VHS I LD I DVD

The future is a hot, dry, evil place, teeming with rough punks who fight amongst each other for what is left of society. But amidst them walks Kenshiro, the last surviving member of the art of Hakuto Shinken. Known as the "Fist of the North Star" (due to the

look like the Big Dipper), Kenshiro wanders the earth looking for Julia, his fiance who was kidnapped by the ruthless warrior Shin. His fighting skills unmatched, Kenshiro finds himself helping out those in need, protecting the innocent from the scum who take advantage of them at any opportunity. Consistency is the WWW.GAMEFAN.COM

scars on his chest which

word to use for Fist,. There isn't a lot of difference between each episode - Kenshiro stumbles across a gang of Road Warrior-types beating up on some innocent people, and he is forced to make them understand the mistake that they made. If you've seen a few episodes of Fist, and you liked what you saw, then chances are that you'll enjoy the entire series. However, if you saw a few and found no interest in them, well, I doubt later episodes will influence you otherwise. Fist, just might not be your bag - it's old, it's art style and animation look antiquated by today's standards. the story doesn't really grow or advance in new directions, and at times it's just plain silly. Still, Fist of the North Star has that lovable charm that classic anime has, and if you're a true anime buff then you just can't help but get a kick out of it. The redone music IS a definite no-no when it

comes to "translation purity," but the new sound-

track doesn't bother me enough to make me

argue the point with much fury. - shidoshi







#### DVD Connection Anime - ultra high-qual digital style

#### Area 88: Ultimate Collection

Adventure • OAV • US Manga • 13+
50 min • Sub | Dub • VHS | LD | DVD

#### nime

ck years ago, I remember running across a little known titcalled Area 88 while visiting a local comic shop. Area 88 ouldn't have caught my attention if it hadn't been for the t that Capcom brought out a great little shooter called UN quadron, a game I loved to play in the arcades. So, naturalwhen I realized that this was the manga that spawned at game, I decided to check it out. After reading a couple issues I was hooked - Area 88 grows on you in that acrossian-soap-opera kind of way. The story revolves ound Shin Kazama, a guy who had everything going for

m until it was all taken away by his supposed st friend Kanzaki. Shin is tricked one night by ınzaki, while drunk, into signing his soul away to e Asran Mercenary Air Force. With Shin out of the ay, Kanzaki believed he'd be able to steal away e heroes beautiful girl, Ryoko. Stuck in Asran, nin has to become the one thing he hates the ost - a cold blooded fighter pilot. For him to turn to his normal life, he must do one of three things - pay the 1.5 million dollar penalty to Asran, try to desert, or stick it out for a three year term. The manga is represented quite well onscreen: the pacing of the film is kept pretty fateful, and the artist's love for the detail of modern war avionics shines through with ever plane that is introduced in the story. If you enjoy a good soap opera type anime such as the before mentioned Macross (although the dog fighting isn't nearly as exciting) this title might just be what you're looking for. - Maurice Williams

#### DVD

Area 88 pretty much falls into the "standard DVD" category for Central Park Media - a competent compression job, picture quality that is nice but not sparkling, and overall, a worthy conversion of an older title to DVD, yet nothing that would be considered a show off disc. I get that weird "shimmering" effect on this disc like I did on Grave of the Fireflies, but it seems that is a weird effect of my set-up, not the disc. As I said, not an "all out" disc, but I never expected it to be, and it certainly gets the job done - and that's what is important. - shidoshi







#### Tenchi in Tokyo: A New Enemy

//Action • TV (3 eps.) • Pioneer • 13+

nime

Lookie here... another volume of Tenchi in Tokyo, another set of wacky adventures, another 75 minutes of fun times with your favorite cast. Over the last volume or two, the series has taken on a slightly more serious tone, and you know what? I love it. Yes, I

remember saying that I was glad TiT was more comedic and not as series last time I covered it, but this is a different kind of series, one Tenchi has been somewhat lacking with it's large cast fully of possibilities. I know a lot of Tenchi fans have bashed TTT, for it's story-

lines, different interpretations of the characters, and new style of artwork. Well, I'm here to stand up for it, as I think it's worlds better than Tenchi Universe. The characters really aren't that different, and the new art style, while not traditional Tenchi, is beautiful and very fitting for this series (I'm really getting into this art style, that somewhat strange look that titles like Kite, Perfect Blue, Lain, and other such titles has). This one is very much growing on me, and so is Sakuya.. I'm actually rooting



Anyone familiar with Pioneer's DVDs knows that they have two "levels" of DVD production - big, wiz-bang all out efforts for their major feature titles, and nice but bare-bones packages for things like TV series. At first, of course, I wanted everything to be special-edition feature-laden collector's items, but I'm a bit older and wiser now and

> look on some things. Actually, after looking at the first volume of TIT and this one, I have to say that the quality of the transfer seems to have improved quite a bit over time - definitely a good thing. Not only that, but the subtitles are yellow now, which is hopefully a trend Pioneer is planning

actually have a realistic out-

to continue with. Take a TV series, make it look pretty on DVD, slap on an extra or two, give it chapter stops, and there you go, that's all that actually needs to be done. So long as Pioneer keeps working to put out even the little things like TV shows on DVD, and so long as they look and sound nice. that's all I could really ask for. - shidoshi









#### AF News Service

#### Pokemania Continues

Goods Showcase article on upcoming Pokemon products from Viz. that's now all of the news to come from them about these popular little Nintendo creatures. It seems that the Pokemon manga decided that it was going to take over the US comic market.

and became the best-selling comic on our shores. Anyhow, here's the press release:

Viz Comics proudly announces that its *Pokemon* 

comic book is the best-selling comic in America.

Totaling sales from comic stores, newstands, and other retailers, each monthly issue of Pokemon sells more copies over time than any other title published that month. This is the first time that a manga (Japanese comic), a black & white comic, and Viz, America's 5th largest comic publisher, has been

Viz's first Pokemon comic issue (Pokemon: The Electric Tale of Pikachu #1) in November '98 was a sleeper hit and sold out immediately. It has gone through 8 printings in the past 8 months, selling a total of over 200,000 copies. Each successive issue of Viz's three Pokemon mini-series (The Electric Tale of Pikachu (Nov. '98-Feb. '99), Pikachu Shocks Back (Mar. '99-Jun. '99), and Electric Pikachu Boogaloo (Jul. '99-Oct. '99)) has continued this trend. The sold-out first printings are in great demand; Wizard magazine (June '99) ranks the first printing of Pokemon: The Electric Tale of Pikachu #1 as the most collectible comic in America. Initial sales to the comic market

through Diamond Comic Distributors, America's

largest comic distributor, have steadily climbed

from No. 96 among initial sales in March to No.

56 in June (outselling series by Marvel, DC, Image, and Dark Horse). When adding the total sales from other stores and distribution, *Pokemon* outsells all other comics, and is now selling through more outlets than ever before.

#### Angels or IRS?

Daily Yomiuri Online, a Japanese news website, reported that the president of Gainax, a very popular Japanese animation production company responsible for such titles as "Neon Genesis Evangelion," was arrested in early July on suspicion of conceeling 1.5 billion yen in profits. In October of last year, the Tokyo Regional Taxation Bureau filed a complaint against Gainsx and its president, Takeshi Sawamura, for supposedly violating the corporate tax law. According to sources, Gainax allegedly evaded paying about 500 million yen in corporate taxes for a two-year period, ending in July 1997. Tokyo prosecutors have begun investigating the

company in Musashino, western Tokyo. What effect, if any, this will have on Gainax, it's current properties, or future projects will have to be seen.

# Wars DVD ADV Films brought out the

game-inspired

first volume of the video

Sakura

Wars anime a few months ago, and this October, they will be bringing out the second volume. However, along with the second volume, they will also be releasing a DVD collection containing both volumens. Cool, you say? Well, whar's even better is that the DVD version will have a suggested retail price of \$29.95 · the price of ONE volume on VHSI When you consider that you not only get two volumes for that price, but that you also get them in both languages, that's quite a deal.

isn't DVD wonderful? It took ADV while to get into the DVD game, I now that they are here, they seem to very serious about it. So, if you'r Sakura Wars fan, or just an anime DVD fan in general, look for this coming in October.

#### Sailor Moon Says...

Guardians Of Order, Inc., the compa who brought us the Sailor Moon fan sy role-playing game (the pen and par type), announced recently that it v release a Sailor Moon Collectal Button Combat Game and Sailor Mo Customized Dice in Autumn of 1999,

The Sallor Moon Collectable But Combat Game, based on James Ernet popular "Button Men" game, will sh off full-color artwork featuring in major heroes and villains from in Sallor Moon universe. The game is fast-paced two player interactive bat for any age, and is especially tailorative tournament play. The first six sets the Sallor Moon Collectable Butt Combat Game will be available t Autumn, with expansions sets comi in Winter.

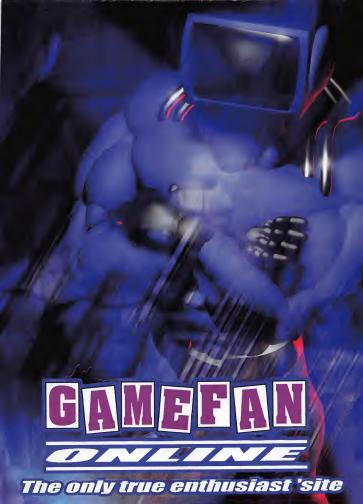
The Sailor Moon Role-Playing Gan which was released in November 1998, has proven to be a big hit. So, i only likely that accessories would released to join the main books a resource guides. The Sailor Mo Customized Dice are an accessory any Sailor Moon RPG players out the and contain two dice for each "Inne Sailor Scout and Tuxedo Mask - ea pairing of dice will match the unifor and "scheme" color of each sco-Additional dice sets, which will go alo with other characters and the "Oute Sailor Scouts, will follow in early 200 - shidoshi

### News Service Previews

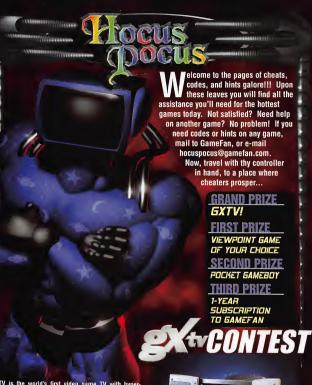
#### **∀**Gundam

Well, here's a quick look at the newest of the Gundam titles to his Japan. While I don't have a lot of information on it, I do know that the major Gundam robot was re-designed by Sid Mead, who helped on the design of things such as 2010, Alian, and Blade Runner. I'm not too sure if I like the new design or not, but it reminds me of the older-style mecha and robots from the early days of anime, so that is kind of a cool sapect. That, or it just looks silly. - shidoshi









GXTV is the world's first video game TV with hyperamplified sound and graphics. Enhance the thrill of gaming with adjustable speaker doors, stereo surround sound and a 15-watt sub wooler. Plus, the intense screen graphics will make you feel, like your head right inside the game. GXTV is also a 181-channel 13" stereo TV with two AV inputs, stereo headphone jack, hacklif remote control and tilt/swivel stand. So whatchs waitin for? Send in those codes and maybe you can win one of these GXTVs for yourself!



# SW Episode One: Racer Unlock All Cheats



ect tournament mode, and select an empty save slot. Now, before you enter any initials hold Z, and enter "RRTANGENT" using L Shift to select each letter. You should see the letters appear in the bottom left corner each time you enter a letter. Once this is done, highlight "End" and press L, then B. Select the same file, then hold Z and enter "ABACUS" using the L Shift again to enter each letter. Then highlight "End" and press L Shift, followed by A. The words "OK" should appear at the bottom left corner. Now, enter your initials and start a game. Pause anytime and use the D-pad to press up, left, down, and right. The Cheat Menu option should appear and all the cheats should be unlocked.



**Cheat Codes** 

Enter one of the following cheats at the main menu. You will hear a confirmation sound if you input the code correctly.



BOOKES STILTS

Invincibility - Press L2, L2, R2, R2, L2, R2, L2, L1, R2, R1, L2, L1, L1, No police - Press L1, L2, R1, R1, R1, R1, L2, L2, R1, R1 L1, L1, R2. Rear wheel steering - Press R1, R1, R1, R2, L2, R1, R2, L2, L1, R2, R1, L2, L1. Long suspension - Press R2, L2, R1, R2, L2, L1, R2, R2, L2, L1, R2, R1 Mini cars - Press R1, R2, R1, R2, L1, L2, R1, R2, L1, R1, L2, L2, L2



## Scoopswrestling.com Real News, Real Results, Real-Time



# **EXAMPLE:**

Bill Clinton

Politics - Real or Fake

# **EXAMPLE:**

Holyfield vs Lewis Boxing - Real or Fake

# **EXAMPLE:**

A 350lb 6 foot 4 inch giant does a back flip from 15 feet in the air on live television.

Scoops Wrestling ... Everything else is FAKE!

A Member of the Scoops Wrestling Network

# Croc 2 Gain 100 Crystals



On the Title Screen, hold L1 and then press  $\blacksquare$ ,  $\blacksquare$ ,  $\bullet$ ,  $\downarrow$ ,  $\leftarrow$ ,  $\rightarrow$ ,  $\leftarrow$ , and  $\rightarrow$ . You should hear a soft confirmation sound if you input the code correctly. During gameplay hold down R2 and press n to add 100 crystals.



KoF '99 Dream Match Different Character Versions



At the character selection screen, highlight one of the following fighters, then hold Start and press any button. Some of the special versions of the characters may have missing moves (like the alternate Terry Bogard with no Power Dunk), but for the most part they have most of their moves



Terry Bogard - Real Bout 2 Terry Bogard



Andy Bogard - Real Bout 2 Andy Bogard



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Kyo Kusanagi – KoF '95 Kyo Kusanagi



Yashiro - KoF '97 Orochi Yashiro



Shermie - KoF '97 Orochi Shermie





Rugal - Omega Rugal(a special version just for the DC version)





Quake II Various Password Codes To enable the following password codes, you have to go to into the Single player Load Screen. When you're at the

Load Screen, select not to use the Memory Pack, and you'll get a pass-

word screen. Enter the following passwords at this screen:



S3T1 NF1N 1T3S H0TS Infinite ammo in multi-player mode

S3TL 0WGR VITY ???? Low gravity in multi-player mode



S3TC 00LC 0L0R S??? Alternate colors

Rogue Squadron Hidden Naboo Fighter



Yesl Perhaps the best kept secret in Rogue Squadron finally is revealed To play the Naboo Fighter in Rogue Squadron, go to the cheat screen and





enter "HALIFAX?", then enter "IYNG-WIE!". The Naboo Fighter will be to the left of the X-Wing fighter. You can select the Naboo Fighter on any stage except snow levels.

GameShark Codes

Evil Zone - PS

Unlock Everything 800A83DE FFFF 800A83E0 FFFF 800A83E2 FFFF 800A83E4 FFFF

Ape Escape

Infinite HP 800EC268 0005

> Infinite Lifes 300F442C 0005

Infinite oxygen 800F4D68 0258

All items D00F5164 0003 300F5164 00FF

Dino Crisis - PS Import

Infinite Energy 800AE1DC 04B0

Turbo shooting D0049208 0007 80049208 0001

Unlimited Bullet D0062708 0000 80062708 2821

Clear Time 00.00 800B612C 0000 800B612E 0000

Continue - 0 300B6132 001E Number Of Saves - 0 300B612B 0000 Fire Pro G Wrestling - PS Import

All Techniques in Fighting Road mode D0193A74 4445 30193A96 0002

30193A96 0002 Persona 2 – PS Import

Infinite Money 8007F428 E0FF

8007F42A 05F5 Max Hp 80080540 03E7 80080542 03E7

Max Sp 80080544 03E7 80080544 03E7 80080546 03E7

All card B0170002 0000 8007F7B6 03E7 B0160002 0000 8007F7E4 03E7 B0490002 0000 8007F810 03E7 B0060002 0000 8007F8A2 03E7

800/F8A2 03E7
All items
B1280001 0000
3007F802 0063
B0430001 0000
3007F868 0063
B0440001 0000
3007F868 0063
B0410001 0000
3007F868 0063
B0870001 0000
3007F47C 0063
B0A40001 0000

Tales of Phantasia - PS Import

Save Everywhere D00DCC8C 0200 300DCC8D 0000 D0088726 6000 80088726 6200

> Unlimited TP D0014A40 52AD 80131E0A 0040 D0014A40 52AD 800A1C5A 0040

Infinite Money 8008740C 0098 8008740E 967F

Level up Each Round 80086F00 0000 80087180 0000

All of Cless' skills D0014A40 52AD B0130001 0001 30086F48 0001 30087A64 00FF 30087A66 00FF 30087A66 00FF 30087A6C 00FF 30087A6C 00FF

#### Star Ocean: Second Story Private Actions Guide

Story

One of the most unique features in the original Star Ocean were the Private Actions sequences. While these PA's were totally optional in the game, it allowed you to get secret items, secret characters, and more importantly, a



deeper involvement into the story. Star Ocean: The Second Story continues this feature, expanding it to the point where it very well could change any of the 87 possible endings. In fact, Private Actions in Star Ocean: The Second



Story are the most influential factor for determining the endings in the game. And with the mammoth amount of PA's in the game, it's a good thing you've turned to this page which list all of the Private Actions in all the towns in the



Private Actions:
What the hell are they?
Private Actions allow you to interact
with different characters in your party.
The ultimate goal in a Private Action is



to alter the relationship between characters, whether it's on a friendship level



To see a Private Action, you'll have to be on the world map just outside of the town. As you approach a town, you'll see the Private Actions icon flashing in the upper right hand corner of the



Private Action. This automatically makes you enter the town and your party will split up. Now, you'll be able to see different Private Actions that either involve the character your con-



trolling (Claude or Rena) or other characters. It's kind of a scavenger hunt to find some of your party members, but most aren't that hard to find. As noted, Private Actions are primari-

As noted, Private Actions are primarily used to get different endings for each



character. Not all Private Actions will affect the relationship between characters. Some of the Private Actions may not do anything at all. But there are some Private Actions that will only occur once in a game that could drastically change an ending in the game. Most of these ending changing Private

Actions come in major parts where you see the Private Action, leave the town, and activate the Private Action again.

As your relationship grows with caresin characters, you'll see how it affects
sin characters, you'll see how it affects
from and plant of the plant of the plant of the plant
from and plant have been talking a lot 
in Private Actions and they've been 
developing a deep relationship. If during battle, Rena gets alain, don't be surprised if Claude starts to hit for double 
damage and attacking twice as fast. 
While there is no solid indicator of how 
the strong the relationship between 
characters are, when you resoft Fun City 
(WAY later in the game) the fortune 
tellers there will be able to tall you who 
has romantic intentions with who in 
your party.

So with that, here is a list of the Private Actions that I have found with Claude in the game. If I happen to miss any (and I better not have) or if you have any comments/questions, feel free to email me at achau@gamefan.com. Watch out next issue for Rena's Private Action List.

## Claude's Private Action List

Arlia

Location: Rena's House
Person to Find: Rena
Requirement: This PA takes place
before Celine joins the party at the
Town of Cross.

Location: The eastern section of Arlia Person to Find: Rena and Precis Requirement: Takes place after the events of the Lacour Tournament of Arms. You also must have Precis in your party.

Location: The easter section of Arlia Person to Find: Celine Requirement: Celine must be in your party. So far, I've had it happen 1 out of 3 times, but this PA seems to be random.

Location: Balcony of Mayor's House Person to Find: Opera Requirement: Opera must be in your party before you head out to the

Hoffmann Ruins
Town of Salva

Location: Southern section of Salva Person to Find: Rena Requirement: Umm...just to notice that there is a PA when you reach this town.

Location: Right next to the Weapons Shop in Salva Person to Find: Young girl Requirement: Stay at the inn in the Town of Cross.

Location: The Jewelry Shop of Salva Person to Find: Rena Requirement: Stay at the inn in the Town of Cross Location: The Jam Shop of Salva Person to Find: Precis Requirement: Precis must be in your party.

Location: Entrance to the Salva mine Person to Find: Ashton Requirement: Ashton must be in your party.

Location: Southern section of Salva Person to Find: Opera Requirement: Opera must be in your

Location: Jam Shop of Salva Person to Find: Celine Requirement: Celine must be in your party.

Town of Cross Location: East section of Town of Cross Person to Find: Rena and Celine Requirement: Takes place before the major events at the Port of Clik. Celine must be in your party

Location: West section of Town of Cross Person to Find: Ashton and Precis Requirement: Ashton and Precis must be in your party, and you have to have enough money to buy a Music Box.

Location: Town of Cross Person to Find: Bowman Requirement: Bowman must be in your

Location: The street right before going into Cross Castle Person to Find: Ernest Requirement: Right after you get Celine in your party.

Port of Clik Location: Port of Clik Person to Find; Filia, the fortune teller Requirement: Happens before the major events at Port of Clik

Mars Village Location: Eastern section of Mars Person to Find: Rena Requirement: Happens before you enter the Lacour Tournament of Arms

Location: Eastern section of Mars Person to Find: Ashton Requirement: Ashton must be in your party and before you enter the Lacour Tournament of Arms.

Location: Western section of Mars Person to Find: Rena Requirement: Happens anytime after you have visited of Hilton but before you enter the Lacour Tournament of Arms.

Location: Western section of Mars Person to Find: Precis Requirement: Precis must be in your party and before you enter the Lacour Tournament of Arms.

Location: Tool Shop of Mars Person to Find: Precis

Requirement: Precis must be in your party and before you enter the Lacour Tournament of Arms (see a pattern here?).

Port of Herlie

Location: Eleanor's house in Port of Person to Find: Bowman

Requirement: Bowman must be in your party and happens before the major events in Lacour take place.

Hilton Location: Hilton Person to Find: Prince Chris from the Town of Cross Requirement: Celine must not be in your party. Happens right after you

arrive in Hilton. Location: The inn at Hilton Person to Find: Celine Requirement: Celine must be in your party.

Lacour Location: Eastern section of Lacour Person to Find: Young gir Requirement: Happens before the major events of Lacour

Location: Western section of Lacour Person to Find: Old woman Requirement: Happens before the major events of Lacour.

Location: Academy Library Person to Find: Rena Requirement: Umm...find Rena Location: Lacour Academy

Person to Find: Salesman Requirement: none Town of Linga Location: Precis's House

Person to Find: Precis Requirement: You have to see the Private Action with Precis in the Town of Salva first. Location: Northern section of Linga

Person to Find: Precis Requirement: Happens after the major event of Lacour takes place. Bowman can't be in your party.

Central City Location: Brandywine Inn Person to Find: Rena Requirement: Takes place right after you arrive in Central City

Location: Brandywine Inn Person to Find: Opera Requirement: Ernest cannot be in your

Location: Brandywine Inn Person to Find: Noel Requirement: Noel has to be in your

Location: City Hall Person to Find: Chisato Requirement: Chisato must be in your party and you must talk to Rayfus at the University.

Location: Landscape Inn Person to find: Celine Requirement: Celine must be in your

North City Location: North City Person to Find: Opera Requirement: Opera must be in your party, but Ernest cannot. This PA only happens after you have beaten all four fields (Intelligence, Power, Courage,

Location: Tool Shop Person to Find: Chisato Requirement: Chisato must be in your

and Love).

party.

party. Location: North City

Person to Find: Precis Requirement: Make sure to visit Fienal Location: Encyclopedia Person to Find: Rena

Requirement: none Giveaway ocation: Giveaway University

Person to Find: Ernest Requirement: Ernest must be in your party.

Location: Giveaway University Person to Find: Chisato Requirement: Chisato must be in your four fields.

party. Also, you have to have beaten all Location: Noel's House Person to Find: Noel Requirement: Noel must be in your

Town of Armlock Location: Yamato Restaurant Person to Find: Ashton Requirement: Ashton must be in your party.

Location: Mirage's House Person to Find: Leon Requirement: Leon must be in your

Fun City Location: Inn Person to Find: Precis Requirement: Precis must be in your

party. Location: Fortune-telling rooms Person to Find: Rena

Requirement: none

Location: Fighting Arena Person to Find: Precis and Ashton Requirement: Both members must be in your party. Furthermore, Ashton must know the Sword Dance technique.

There's no doubt that Power Stone is one of the most anticipated titles for the Dreamcast, thanks in part to its popularity in arcades, as well as the fact that it's a bitchin' game in its own right. So if you want tips and strategies about Power Stone, who are you going to trust? Those second-rate video game magazines? Well, if you wanna be second best, that's fine. But if you want to be the cream of the crop, the best of the best, the top dog, then you've come to the right place, ECM and I. your friendly neighborhood dango, will give you the lowdown on our E3-tournament-winning tactics, our ace-in-the-hole tricks, and our Sun Tzu-like strategies. We won't guarantee that you'll be able to topple either of us in Power Stone (cuz a lot of it has to do with our raw talent which only a serious blood transfusion may impart) but you will notice a rise in the number of victories you experience. Now, let's batter some buffoons!

#### The Basic Tactics Jump Kick



kick is to Power Stone as the fireball is to Street Fighter II. Not only does the jump kick automatically lock on to where your opponent is, it also knocks loose any Power Stones that your unwary target possesses. It's important to note that if two players jump kick simultaneously, the one who jumps the highest will win the joust. This is where characters with doublejump abilities have the advantage (e.g. Fokker and Ayame).





advantages in certain situations, is the ceiling hang, Jump, press up on the controls plus the grab command.



along the ceiling. This leads to the loosening of certain objects from the ceiling, which you can then use to



button will automatically perform a jump kick. Even better,



attack (while in the air, down plus the grab command). Remember, Walls And

Poles Are Your Friends



stages if you want to be the best of the best. Proper use of the walls and poles can be just



overcome difficult enemies Walls are extremely useful in two ways. First, jumping off the wall will open up more options for attacking and evading. However, an impor tant attack that shouldn't be overlooked is performed by simply walking against a wall



pressing the grab com This will make your fighter launch himself off the wall towards the opponent. This can also be done in the air — just jump against the wall and press the grab command for the aerial version. Secondly, slamming an opponent into walls can loosen certain objects around him. Examples include the gourds on the wall in Wang Tang's stage, and the barrels above the wall in Galuda's stage.

Poles and beams have two main uses. All characters can jump onto a beam and slide up or down. From this position, you can immediately jump kick by pressing the kick



attack with the grab com-mand. Another trick to keep in mind is the spin attack. With the exception of Gunrock



and Galuda, if a character is on the ground right next to a beam, use the grab command and your character will start spinning around the post and eventually launch himself at an opponent. While it's an easily telegraphed attack, it looks really cool. Performing a grab command on the beam with Galuda or Gunrock will cause them to grab it and smack the enemy with it. Also, all characters in their Power Drive Mode can uproot the pole to use as a weapon.

## Evading



techniques is evading close attacke Whether it's a weapon, a barrel, or a foot in the chest, use the evasion



Evasion is executed by pressing any direction (except towards your opponent), and the grab command. A blue shadow trail will appear from



where you were and you'll sidestep in that direction. This technique is excellent for attackers using weapons like bazookas or flame-throwers. Simply get close to them, and as they try to shoot you, evade and attack immediately!

#### Power Drive Tips One of the biggest mistakes

rookie players make is wasting their Power Drive attacks immediately after transforming. This is a HUGE mistake since you have a certain amount of protection from

attack while in Power Drive form. Best thing to do? Use other weapons to attack the opponents until you are sure you will hit them with your Power Drive attack. The ideal thing is to stun them without exhausting the Power Drive Meter, thereby setting up a Power Fusion attack for maximum damage.

 Dangohead's Dojo:
 While ECM may have gotten the better of me during the finals of the E3 Power Stone tournament, I attribute it to two things: (1) his prowess at *Power Stone* and (2) those cute Eidos models who kept winking at me while I was playing! But excuses aside, pounding the other "professional gamers" into lit-tle, itty-bitty pieces was no problem. You want to know more about how the one and only Dangohead dropped bombs like Hiroshima upon the so-called competition? Well, read forth my young pupils and you will learn.

## Character of Choice:

Gunrock First off, the great majority of players at E3 played the likes of Wang Tang, Fokker (now Falcon), Ayame, and Ryoma. Little did they know that they should've been Gunrock, as he's probably the most powerful character in the game. How do I know Because I used him all this? the way up until the finals! Then, of course, I switched to Wang Tang, which was my only mistake of the tournament (ECM's Note: ah, here come the real excuses).

So why Gunrock you ask? Sure, he's a big target that's easy to hit. And yes, he doesn't have the hops of Wang Tang nor the speed of Ayame. However, he's the strongest character in the game, possesses an excellent Power Fusion, and has the fastest throwing ability of all the characters (followed Galuda, Fokker, Ryoma, Wang Tang, Jack, Rouge, and Ayame). Gunrock may not suit beginner-to-intermediate players, but for those advanced in the ways of the Power Stone, Gunrock is your best choice.

#### **Gunrock Tactics** Power Fusion: Rock 'N Roll As stated above, Gunrock has

an excellent Power Fusion attack called "Rock 'N Roll." Growing to twice his size, Gunrock rolls into a ball and steamrolls anything in his way. This Power Fusion instantly hits as soon as he expands in size, and if you



ient of this attack, you might as well go and make yourself a PB&J sandwich. If you're playing Gunrock, you can actually juggle your hapless victim by jumping while performing the Rock 'N Roll Power Fusion.



Once you've got all three Power Stones and it's "clob-berin' time," one attack that often confuses opponents is jumping in the air and press-



Gunrock smashing down to the ground. If you don't hit your opponent with this "Death From Above" attack, when Gunrock lands on the



erupt from the ground and hit any standing opponent. This attack stuns the opponent, which can be followed up with any choice attack (



since it doesn't decrease the Power Drive Meter).

Yell Loud and



One advanced tactic I love using is grabbing beams or poles and whacking the target in mid-air. Gunrock and Galuda are the only characters



that can tear away beams and poles to use as very, large bats. While this is fun, it also has an EXTREME amount of delay. One trick I like to use is when an opponent is holding an object that can be thrown.



to predict when they're going to throw the item, and right before they do, I grab a pole, and hit both the thrown object AND the enemy in one swing! This is really hard to do against Galuda, who can hurl boxes and barrels like fastballs.

Barrels, boxes, and various flinging items o' hurt Boxes, crates, barrels, stone decorations, drums, bombs, chairs, tables, wooden horses, packages, pots, signs... could go on, but I think you've got the picture. The mainstay



weapon that's abundant on every stage, thrown objects are the weapons that every Power Stone player must know how to use. Since I use Gunrock, who hurls objects at Pedro Martinez velocities,



thrown objects are definitely the best weapons. Also, different thrown objects may have different properties when they hit. For example, the large gourd will automatically cover an enemy's head if it connects properly. While the enemy is trying to get the gourd off his head, he's open for an attack. Finally, bombs



need special care in use, for the obvious reason that they can explode in your hand. Smaller bombs have a timer of three seconds while the "Fat Man" bombs have a six second timer. NEVER toss the bomb too early, as the opponent can catch it and toss it back at you! Toss it right when the timer has one second left. And if you don't want to directly toss a bomb at a target, use the kick button and direct your throw to anywhere you like.

## My Rankings

To round it all off, here are my two cents on all the characters and how they rank.

Slow and weird, I really can't see anyone using this charac-ter unless they're playing to win by time. While he's not

the fastest character, his heli- ! copter move (jump, then press punch in the air) allows him to escape most dangers. His Power Drive attacks aren't that great since both of them can be easily dodged. His Killer Dance Power Fusion has good priority and can hit enemies behind him, but still has small range. Misery Rain Power Fusion can be easily

dodged, despite the good

damage it delivers.

7) Rouge Though she has good jump capabilities, Rouge still isn't powerful enough. Her throw speed is awful, being 2<sup>nd</sup> worst in the game. Worst still are her Power Drive attacks. Her Flame attack is easily avoided, and getting her Magic Carpet attack to hit is an exercise in futility. Her saving grace is the fact that she has three Power Fusion attacks. While the Power Fire Power Fusion attack can be somewhat easily avoided, it does good damage, as well as her Love Dance Power Fusion attack. Her third, the Skull Fire, is done in the air. It's both long-range and hard to avoid. Surprisingly, it doesn' do as much damage as you'd think.

#### 6) Galuda

Despite having excellent power and throw speed (second only to Gunrock), Galuda has huge weaknesses: his somewhat slow speed and weaker state in Power Drive mode, compared to other characters. His Light Arrow Power Drive attack isn't bad. but it's rather slow and easy to dodge The Divine Punishment of Light Power Fusion does good damage, but again, is easy to dodge. Finally, to connect with the Heaven and Sky War Cry Power Fusion attack, you have to be at throw distance of your target or they have to be jumping at you. While this Power Fusion attack deals a ton of damage, it's very tough to connect.

## 5) Avame

While she's the fastest character in the game with good jumping skills, Ayame has the slowest throwing speed and needs to connect a lot of times to do damage. Her Power Drive attacks are okay, but easily dodged. And despite what you see, her 100 Flower Power Fusion attack can be EASILY avoided. And unless you're really close, her Cherry Blossom Dance Power Fusion attack can be easily dodged. Even if it connects, the 100 Flower Power Fusion attack does more damage.

4) Ryoma Average speed with good damaging attacks, Ryoma's strength lies in the fact that he's armed with a sword. This gives him excellent range on his normal attacks and it's hard to evade some of his sword swings. Ryoma has decent Power Drive and Power Fusion attacks, but when compared to some of the other characters, his Power Fusion attacks do average damage. When in Power Drive Mode, holding the kick button will keep him from releasing his laizin Power Drive attack, which is useful against an opponent that keeps jumping. A good character for beginners.

3) Fokker Fokker (or Falcon) is a good choice. Nice speed, large damage, and the ability to double jump... the only weak-ness is his Power Rocket Power Fusion attack. first hit of this attack misses, it's pretty easy to dodge the rest of the hits. Otherwise, his attacks in Power Drive form are excellent, and his Power Explosion Power Fusion attack is hard to avoid. 2) Wang Tang

#### ECM's favorite character and undoubtedly one of the most powerful characters in the game, Wang Tang has excellent speed, great jumping ability, and his Power Drive attacks are excellent. His Power Fusion attacks are quite damaging, but his Great Dragon Ball Power Fusion attack is avoided easily if you're far away. Likewise, the Military Heaven Dance has a

good chance of hitting the opponent, as long as they're pretty close to you. 1) Gunrock What he lacks in speed, he makes up for in everything else. Thus, Gunrock is arguably the best character in the game. Awesome damage, the fastest throwing speed in the game, combined with decent Power Drive attacks, and good Power Fusion attacks, making him my choice pick. While Wang Tang

has better mobility, he needs to hit the enemy more often to do substantial damage. Gunrock's motto? "If you can do it in one hit, then do it in one hit!"

## • Hail to the King, Baby!

Welcome Power Stone warriors, tis I, ECM, Still fresh from the recent ass-handing at the E3 Power Stone Press Tourney (I, of course, was handing out the asses). While Dango is a mighty warrior in his own right, his skills pale in comparison to the 'one who is always angry.' So sit for a spell, young grasshoppas, and prepare to be enlightened in the way of the warrior (<urk>, that hurt).

#### Who Ya Gonna Call?

So you want to know who you should use to put the hurt on those mere mortals you call opponents (we like to call 'em pro-gamers... hahl)? It's quite Dangohead advocates the use of Gunrock (a truly tough customer), I'm gonna stick by my guns and say, if you want to win, Wang-Tang is the only way to go; brutal strength is no substitute for raw speed in the kinetic world of Power

## I Feel the Need for Speed



Wang-Tang is simple: the boy moves faster than nearly any other character in the game (only Ayame is quicker) and you should completely abuse this! This becomes incredibly important when dodging missile attacks from enemies, and those feeble jump-kicking fools who think that's all PS is about (believe me, E3 was a jump kick-fest; it was nighlaughable). Confucius say: 'Silly player who abuse jump kick end up with big headache.' Better yet, couple his lightning reflexes with some serious evasion practice (as noted above), and you'll walk away from round after round without a scratch. While he isn't the fastest character, his short hops make him an ace for dodging all manner of missile attacks, including Ayame's 100 Flower Power Fusion attack (which is much harder to circumvent with the other characters, despite what Dango says).

#### Stomp Kick of Doom



repeatedly assault your foe with a feeble array of jump kicks, the Stomp Kick is where it's at. Simply launch yourself directly over a foe's head (preferably when they're in a corner and don't have much chance of escape) and lay a barrage of stomps to the head



(Chun-Li apparently taught WT some lessons) by pressing punch and kick. For the even more unwary, chase the more foolish around the ring at the beginning of a match and Stomp Kick them the second the round starts. While it won't do much good on somebody proficient in evading, it's a pretty quick way to mop the floor with the meat (it came in mighty handy at the tourney).

#### Wang Tang's Power Drive Punch



WT's energy bolts can be amazingly destructive, but here's a couple of quick tips on efficient delivery: never deliver the 3rd Strike! Sure, it's tempting to keep pummeling your foe into submission, but by only striking twice, you set them up for an instant barrage of two more strikes. Best



vet, it won't deplete your Power Drive bar nearly as much as when you use all three, allowing more miles per gallon (perhaps setting them up for a nice MHD PF move). Oh, and the key to nailing quicker foes with this attack is getting right up near them and doing a couple of quick feints to confuse 'em. then jump and blast the snot outta 'em.

Unless you have somebody hopelessly trapped in a corner or stunned (a la the ol' pot on the head trick), forget about ever using WT's Great Dragon Ball Power Fusion Attack. Advanced players will simply dodge it with ease, or if you



attempt to nail a downed foe, they'll more than likely 'wake up' and toss you right out of your pretty super. The Military Heaven Dance, how-ever, is incredibly useful (and very flashy... each time this move was executed successfully at E3, the crowd erupted in cheers). The key is chaining it with a flurry of punches,



kicks or a little of both. Simply begin a standard chain combo, and toss in the MHD towards the end and feel the satisfaction as your foe's life bar is whittled away to nothing. For serious style points, execute the MHD PF in mid-air when an opponent is sure to buy it... the judges will score it a 10, and you can laugh as your next pants-wetting oppo-

nent steps up to the chopping 🚦 almost best of the fighters you 🚦 block >=)

#### Conserve Your Strength ... Then Strike!



Power Fusion moves, however, is, as Dango stated: Do not waste your Power Fusion attack early on! Save it for a last hurrah as your Power Drive bar is nearly depleted. Or better yet, beat down your foe without using the PF moves. Instead, make use of

the various items scattered throughout the arena coupled with your increased resistance to attacks (the sword is my favorite) and shave the miscreants life bar to so much ruby alitter.

#### What Comes Around Goes Around



Oh, and one more note: learn to catch thrown objects! Some players like to abuse those that are unskilled in the ways of receiving presents Teach from their 'friends.'



anyone that tries to abuse this technique by snagging a tossed package (be it bomb crate, or furniture) and mark it return to sender... address unknown (thank you very much...).

#### The Also-Rans

So, you're not completely convinced that Wang Tang is the man, eh? Well, if you insist on using one of those 'other' characters then here's 'other' characters then here's my listing from worst to

shouldn't be using unless you absolutely must make things harder on yourself.

I'll have to 'ditto' with Dango on this one. Jack is simply the lamest character in the game. Someone made a feeble attempt at using him in the tourney and was summarily annihilated. The character simply doesn't control well, and isn't particularly good at anything. Besides, he's probably not the friendliest chap around (rhymes with whipper) and you don't want him winning the Power stones for himself.

7) Galuda OK, he's strong. And OK Dango managed to take out some of the garbage at the E3 tourney when he accidentally selected him instead of Gunrock, but this guy still sucks. The problem is, while his attacks are extremely devastating (not his Power Fusion moves, though), he simply has a very poor power-tospeed ratio. And noted above, speed is the key in this game (unless you go with Gunrock, see below). If you want to win, he's not the way to go.

# 6) Rouge The only reason Rouge didn't finish below Galuda is the

simple fact that she has some pretty nifty attacks that can catch an unwary attacker off guard. While Dango is correct in saying her Power Fusion moves are pretty weak, I'd have to say it's not a very pleasant experience if someone happens to be engulfed in the Power Fire attack. She's also pretty quick which never hurts in this game.

This guy is pretty useless beyond some solid range normal attacks thanks to his handy sword. Outside of that, his mostly pointless Power Fusion attacks aren't going to win him any points. Still, he's more powerful than Rouge and quicker than Galuda so he can't be all bad. I like to focus on lots of throw attacks in between sword flourishes, coupled with equal amounts of hit-and-run tactics (especially 'hiding' on the roof after whittling a foe down a bit). Just don't rely on his Power Fusion moves.

#### 4) Ayame

Ayame scores serious points simply because of her raw, near-uncontrollable speed. The only fatal fly in the ointment is the fact that she can become a bear to control when things get extremely hectic. While Wang Tang is at the cusp of just fast enough. Avame trips over it into super-sonic territory. It becomes a bit difficult when things get heated to easily target a foe without overshooting the objective. On the plus side, it's much harder to evade Ayame's hand-to-hand attacks and her 100 Flower Power Power Fusion can wreak immense damage on those less-skilled in the hopping or running arts.

While I wouldn't pick the Ryu of Power Stone for his Power Fusion moves (too slow and too easy to avoid), he's a solid character that can deal some serious damage. While he's among the slower characters in the game, his strength more than makes up for any shortcomings there. Problem is, he's only a character for veteran players that have mastered the basics (same goes for Gunrock), as you'll need to do quite a bit of evading to avoid being pummeled by skilled Wang Tang players.

2) Gunrock Dango is right in that Gunrock is a character that only the most advanced players should tackle. His immense strength and high level of resistance (it's very hard to damage this guy) make him a force to be reckoned with in the hands of a highly skilled player. Dango probably made a huge mis-take in choosing WT over him in the final, simply because you should stick with what you know (something I was more than happy to capitalize on) and Dangohead knows Gunrock. Featuring an arsenal of extremely deadly attacks (everything from basic punches to his Power Fusion moves), Gunrock is the character you move on to once you've completely mastered every other aspect of the game - and not until then.

1) Wang Tang Do I even need to bother?



#### Not Enough Dreamcasts?!!

A bit of disturbing news for Sega fans. an ugly industry rumor claims that Sega is having problems producing enough Dreamcasts to meet the tremendous U.S. demand. It's gotten to the point that there's talk of Sega selling Japanese Dreamcasts in U.S. boxes when the system launches in September. Considering initial sales of the system in Japan didn't go as well as hoped for, if this rumor were true, it would effectively kill two birds with one stone. Let's hope this is just a rumor, so we don't have to cry about it later.

#### PocketStation Difficulties

Speaking of production problems, Sony can't churn out the Pocket Stations (whose batteries don't die in three hours) fast enough to meet the large demand out there. As you may have noticed. Sony of America hasn't announced any plans to bring the Pocket Station here yet, due to the difficulties in Japan. The miniature, VMUlike memory card/portable game sys-tem is being supported by many Japanese games, including Final Fantasy VIII. Thankfully, Square EA has announced that the U.S. version of FFVIII will retain Pocket Station compatibility, even though it's not out yet. So when and if the PS comes Stateside, at least gamers can sausage out with Triple Triad on their Pocket Stations.

## Super GameBoy Dolphin?

On a minor peripheral note, word on the street says that the GameBoy Color will be compatible with Nintendo's next-gen console (Dolphin) in some way, but details are very sketchy at the moment.

#### Square Flips Over Dolphin

As for Square, Cerberus touched on it briefly in Japan Now, but in case you missed it... At the international press conference in Japan (where Square officially announced Vagrant Story), the president of the company entered the room and briefly mentioned that "Square is excited about Nintendo's next-generation console." It's only one sentence, and it could mean nothing... but it could also mean everything for Nintendo, since Square's a "system-selling" 3rd party. After their "breakup" with the cartridgebased N64 (which Square didn't feel was capable of producing

the games they wanted), Nintendo fans have been vearning for Square to come back to the fold. And now, they might finally get their wish. Prior to the press conference, all

we knew for sure was that Square was "looking into" developing for Nintendo's Dolphin. Now, it looks like Nintendo's fantasy may have finally come true. Read it and weep, Sony.

#### The Force Will Be With... Sega?

LucasArts has confirmed that a single DC title is in the works. Early speculators used a Jedi mind trick to mislead us so we believed the game in development was Star Wars Trilogy (the model 3 arcade game). But now we're hearing that SWT is not the game we're looking for. Instead, it's supposed to be a port of the upcoming PC game, Obi-Wan, a first person shooter. Move along... move along...

#### **VOOT Suit Riot!!**

Dangohead is weeping tears of joy over this bit of news. If (and that's a big "if") Sega of America decides to pass on bringing Virtual On: Oratorio Tangram to the U.S., other third parties are looking into publishing the title over here. As long as gamers can challenge other sausages over the modem, the world will be a better place. Besides, Sega would be crazy not to release this 3-Step 2 juggernaut Model America... but then again, they let masterpieces like Radiant Silvergun and Grandia slip on the Saturn. Let's hope they've learned their lesson.

#### Geez. More Tears...

Speaking of Grandia, Sega of America is looking into publishing the seguel to Game Arts' stellar RPG which never saw the light of day on the U.S. Saturn. Will someone get ECM a <sniff> hanky? Apparently, Working Designs may not have exclusive rights to all of Game Arts titles after all...

#### PSY Only Months Away?

Getting back to the system launch race, people said it couldn't be done, but multiple sources have confirmed that Sony is planning on releasing the PlayStation 2 this December in Japan (middle of next year for us). At first, industry-types said that meeting a launch date of Christmas was just wishful thinking on Sony's part and that March of 2000 was more realistic. But developer Koei, the financial institution Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, and the online mail order company NCS have all hinted at a December release. We do know that certain 3rd parties have development kits for PS2 already. Yet there's been no talk of launch titles in all this speculation, or a price tag either.

#### No Super Mario 2 for N64

It's time to set the record straight. Super Mario 2... it's not going to be on the N64. No matter how much you bitch and cry, after Zelda Gaiden, all of Nintendo's efforts are being focused on the Dolphin. Gamers might be getting SM2 confused with Super Mario Adventure, the sequel to Mario RPG. which will probably be bouncing Stateside as a cart game, while being released as a DD game in Japan.

Other rumored DD titles in the works include Super Smash Bros. 2 (expect to see more villains) and a Pokemon RPG, which could be just the launch title Nintendo needs to get Japanese gamers excited about the 64DD. Let's just hope they don't call it Super Pokemon RPG.

#### Hyper Super Ultra, Maybe?

What's in a name? "Dolphin" is the code-name Nintendo's using to refer to their new console (due out here next year); but would you really want your console 2000 to be associated with a marine mammal? Rumors on the Internet have been circulating that Nintendo is 'dropping' the name Dolphin for their console, but if you remember, Dolphin was only a codename. It was never the official name for the console, which has yet to be decided upon. Can you foresee another naming war in the near future? Katana? Black Belt? Dural? Dolphin? Nintendo 2000?

#### Dog Loses Bandicoot, Film at 11

Naughty Dog, creators of the ever-popular Crash Bandicoot, has sold the rights of their beloved mascot to Universal. Thus, Crash 3 will be the last game in the platforming series developed by Naughty Dog, while it is putting the finishing touches on Crash Team Racing right now. There's no need to mourn the death of Crash, though, because Universal will probably give us a new Crash game soon enough. As for Naughty Dog, the company is working on a top secret new character for an undisclosed game right now. We'll keep you posted as soon as we find out what those Naughty Dog guys are up to.

#### Dreaming Those Crystal Dreams

What would a month of Other Stuff be without dredging up the most talked about game never to come out? You guessed it, Robotech: Crystal Dreams, that supposed N64 launch title which never came out, might still see the light of day. It's been confirmed that Take Two has bought the rights to the code for this game. Supposedly, they're in a bidding war with Harmony Gold for the publishing rights as we speak. So Robotech fans still have a shred of a dream to cling to.

Write to me, I'm running for president!!! The Postmeister

6301 DeSoto Avenue Suite E Woodland Hills, CA 91367

that the best way

The System Wars

First off, please forgive me for even considering a letter on this topic. I am just as disgusted by people who rant and rave about their own supported "system" as I am about those who complain about the ranters and ravers. However, I was doing a bit of pondering on the topic and came to a realization.

As I look back on my own involvement in video games, I started when I was a kid, maybe 10 years old or so. At the time, I was also very possessive of the things I owned (toys and the likes). I would fight with my brother over who had the coolest figurine, toy car, etc. Today's young gamers are no different. The video game industry is very interesting in that its user base covers a vast variety of age groups. From pre-teens (the ones who are fighting the "system wars") to twenty or thirty-somethings (the adults who are sick of it all). Granted, this is not a cut and dry observation, I am sure that there are adults out there who also do this system war stuff, but to be honest, it is less likely them. The kids have several reasons behind their system support.

First off, they may not be able to fund their hobby like the adult players. So, they may be asking their parents to make the purchase for them. Well, with such a limited amount of income, of course they want the best one. So, they will support their decision maybe with less maturity than an adult. Second, they have to be around friends who judge them (not just on their hobby, but it is a factor). So, they have to support their toys they own to gain acceptance. Third, at that age, youths are generally combative, and may simply enjoy the fight of video game system supremacy.

All in all, this system war stuff is not out of hand, it is not destroying the video game industry, and it is not the proof of ignorant people who don't understand that it is "just the games." It is simply a by-product of the competition in an industry that has a wide set of demographics. I have determined

to handle this issue is simply to ignore this nonsense, and let the kids enjoy themselves. When we get all caught up in it as mature adults. we only add more fuel to the fire. We've just got to keep in mind we of all age groups are in the same boat, and leave it at that,

Mark D Via the Internet

Ahh, I can see that there are those of you who contemplate the morsels of knowledge I've dispensed throughout the vears... this student of Post-Fu has stumbled upon one of the greatest tenets of our art, Posty-fans! It's all about the games, not what you play 'em on.

This industry is about fun... none of these companies need you to be an advocate of their system, they have marketing departments for that. You think there's some big reward down the road for constantly proclaiming how much you think the PlayStation rules or sucks on the 'Net or among your friends? Maybe there's a nice healthy Postal beating in your near future, but that's about the size of it... My advice? Shut your mouth and open your eves for a minute, because every gaming system produced these days rocks hard!



Peter Han from Portland, OR sends us this super-deformed take on Metal Gear hero Solid Snake. How cute and non-threatening!

Hey Posty!

What's up with the lack of 2-D platformers, today? I mean, out of the hundreds of titles these developers release each year, they can't release 3 or 4 a year to satisfy us REAL gamers out here? Every time I read yours, or other mags, there is always somebody complaining that there are no good 2-D games available (and RPG's don't count). Wake the #%@\* up, developers!!! We 2-D gamers ARE out here! At least there's always Treasure and SNK... No, wait! They're going 3-D too! Looks like I'm going to have to find a new hobby...

PS: Where can I find the portal to Bizarro World that ECM found, where polygonal turds bow down before the almighty sprite?

Matt Dengler Dobbs Ferry, NY

All right Mr. Dengler, you've scaled the merciless peaks and humbled yourself before me, begging for scraps from the banquet table of gaming wisdom... this, I can respect you for. But then you go and mention that you read some mags" and force me to unleash the shocking might of my S.T.B. (Steel Toed Boot) upon your unwary cranium. Why, oh why must the voices torment me so?!

But even a wisened gaming sage (such as myself) knows that the flesh is weak. so I'll humor you by dispensing the knowledge you seek. The fact is, the video game industry found itself a new tov when it discovered the polygon. Suddenly two dimensions just didn't seem like enough - they wanted ultimate realism, no matter the cost... and as we now know, the price was far too great. Adios, second dimension... I've found a new dance partner and her name is Zbuffer, Let's tango!

This all probably sounds pretty disheartening, despicable and downright devestating, but ECM's Bizarro World may still come to pass... just don't give up hope. Some companies still create games for the hardcore old-school players (SNK, Cancom, and many others still haven't dropped the ball) and I don't think we'll see the end of 2-D any time soon. Now I'm going to phone up my close, personal friend Jin Kazama over at Namco and tell him you called him a polygonal turd... I'd expect a personal visit from one of my top Post-Fu students any day now!

## Dreamcast On The Bungie Cord?

#### Dear GameFan.

Any chance of a relatively early Oni port to the Dreamcast? It's not fair that only the "swank PC crowd" should have a babe like Konoko fighting for them!

#### A Prospective Dreamcast Owner Parts Unknown, USA

Of course it's fair... that "swank PC crowd" paid thousands of dollars for their gaming rigs, they ought to have something to show for it that the Dreamcast doesn't deliver! You think the thousands upon thousands or PC gaming addicts are happy about the fact that the \$200 CC can match their enormous sweat? Of course not... especially if they're like me, and only make \$5/month!

Bungie hasn't made any announcements ahout Dreamcast port, and as I write this they're still finishing the game itself. Bungie isn't a licensed DC developer though... so don't count on a quick It's like everyport Is Bungie's thing in this world: if the PC version sells like newest heroine on crazy, you'd better believe it's headed for a her way to Sega's DC? console. However, one look at the game's heroine, Konoko, leads me to believe that Bungie's got a real marketable title on their hands!

#### Taking Gaming To New Extremes

Hey, I love you guys' magazine. You really are the last true enthusiast mag, in fact, that's about the meat of my letter—thank you for penhy supporting the Dreamcast. Thank you for recognizing that this will be THE gamers' machine. Thank you for not thinly disquising an unfounded bias against Sega, while calling Nintendo's Dolphin (an as-yet non-existent machine) the system of tomorrow (I'm sure you know who this perpetrator is).

Anyone who is banking on the PlayStation 2, needs to remember; It's impossible and vastly expensive to program for... two things that don't spell out "success, success," Typically, this would leave Sony as the prime developer for the system... but they don't really have first party development. Sure, they have some 2nd parties, but after Crash and Gran Turismo have made their appearances, it's going to suck when only a small handful of compa-

Andy C. Madolora sent us this Silent Hill homage from the House of Funk in Oahu, Hawaii. Scary, and yet so very funky!

nies can make the other ten games for the year.

Thanks for any attention to my letter. Never stop the mag, and could you tell Genki to keep the name Tokyo Highway Battle as such here in the US? The name Tokyo Xtreme Racer really, really sucks. If not, could you print an address at which to contact them?

#### Via the Internet

You know, sometimes I think people forget what the name of this magazine is. If I had a box of frozen peas for every letter I get saying we've 'sold out' for one system or another, I'd be a very rich man... but unfortunately, all I get are these headaches, and the whispering voices that keep telling me to strike down all of gaming's infidels with the five burning fingers of Postal Chil Listen. GameFan's all about what's new and hot... and quess what folks? The Dreamcast is hotter than Denise Richards at poolside in the middle of a hot Los Angeles summer!

But, let's get back to reality here for a second (no simple task, after that Denise flichards mental imaga). The PlayStation 2 will rock, there's almost no doubt in my mind about that. Nintendo's fishy-sounding new hardware, the Dolphin, is also going to rock. Gaming technology is advancing so far, so fast, that it'd be real hard to make a console that sucks technologically. Unless of course, all you have to work with is two rubber bands, a stick of gum, two refiliable pencil leads and your mom's hairnet.

The Dreamcast is here and now. It has games we can play... so you're gonna see a lot of Dreamcast coverage in our magazine and on our website. But don't be shocked to see pages and pages of PlayStation 2 and Dolphin coverage as soon as there's something to look at — because this ain't BlasFan or Selloutfan... it's Gamefan, junior!

Crave is the group of lunatics you want to talk to about the name of Tokyo Highway Battle in the US, and by getting your letter published in these hallowed pages, you've just let them know how little you appreciate the game's new title. But lask

you, Postyfans... doesn't a game by any other name taste just as good as your regular brand?

# Swimming With the Dolphin...

Hows it hanging Posty? This is the first time I've ever e-mailed someone as I got a computer a little over a week ago. But I have a question concerning Nintendo's next system. With all the hype surrounding the PS2, do you

takes to become number one again?

#### Jorge L Perez Via the Internet

Hundreds of millions of dollars at their disposal, the incomparable skill of Shigery Miyamoto, and Rare as its exclusive tag-team partner? Yeah, I'd say Nintendo has what it takes to be number one again, and judging from the spec sheets the "Big N" has been throwing around, their upcoming system isgoing to have all the gas in its tank it'll need to make a huge impact when the system launches. I'm gonna say it one, more time though, because it feels so. good: It's all about the games. Nintendo delivers the quality titles that appeal to every age group, they're going to rock the world; but if they ignore older. gamers as they usually do, they'll be giving Sony and Sega a wide-open window to exploit. All gamers grow up, folks well, all of 'em but ECM and Eggo...

Well the hour is nigh, Posty-fans!
Last month I put my super-salty
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